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Tour the southern capital

The capital of six dynasties is preparing for the centennial of the Xinhai Revolution.



Page 9 Farewell to a scene hero

Band promoter Jon Campbell is leaving Beijing for Canada after 10 years in the music underground.

Private rescue team goes public



In 2009, Yuan Shan, founder of Blue Sky Emergency Rescue, led his 25-member team to relieve 47 state-level emergencies, accidents and natural disaster. Since its founding in 2008, his private rescue team has always been among the first responders.

But access to serve is often delayed pending government approval. As hundreds of grassroots and independent groups across the country have learned, winning that approval is as hard as starting a private media company.

Blue Sky has beaten the odds.

Because of its excellent performance, the Red Cross Society of China, under the Ministry of Civil Affairs, has presented Yuan's team with a certificate officially recognizing it as the country's first private rescue unit.

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Singer's death in surgery reveals market troubles

By Han Manman

The death of pop singer Wang Bei during plastic surgery caused concern about safety and regulation of the booming industry.

Wang, 24, a former contestant on "Super Girl," died on November 15 during a "facial bone-grinding" procedure in Wuhan, Hubei Province.

During the surgery, the woman began bleeding from her jaw. The blood flowed into her trachea, effectively drowning and suffocating her with her own blood, according to the statement by the Hubei health department.

Two days before Wang's death, another 48-year-old woman died of suffocation after undergoing a cosmetic procedure at Rongjun Hospital in Beijing.

The deaths have fuelled concerns about the dangers of plastic surgery. As many as 3 million young people have cosmetic surgery each year, seeking an edge in work and romance.

Plastic surgery is the fourth largest consumption market after housing, vehicles and tourism. The Ministry of Health said China's plastic surgery industry generates 15 billion yuan. The figure is expected to rise 20 percent annually. In 2009, more than 200,000 people were working in the plastic surgery industry at some 50,000 hospitals, clinics and beauty salons.

Statistics from the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery show that China is third to the US



Young people seek cosmetic surgery to get an edge in work and romance.
CFP Photo

and Brazil and the largest plastic surgery market in Asia, performing 13 percent of the total operations.

The demand has given rise to a number of unauthorized business establishments and surgeons performing cosmetic procedures, said Zhang Huabin, a professor of plastic surgery at southern China's Guangdong Medical College.

He said the deaths have exposed the industry's chaotic regulation system. Loose approval procedures have granted many unqualified doctors the license to operate at the risk of patients' lives.

"There are many untrained doctors performing operations, which is risky and irresponsible," Zhang said.

A cosmetology nurse surnamed Chen at a local plastic surgery hospital said many local beauty salons and clinics do not have a commercial license to perform plastic surgery despite performing facial bone-grinding, blepharoplasty and rhinoplasty on a daily basis.

The salons and clinics use doctors from local hospitals to perform the surgeries, she said.

"They don't check the doctor's training or if he is certified. They just want real doctors to help them earn money," Chen said.

"To maximize profits, many salons and clinics use substandard or antiquated equipment and materials in their surgeries," she said.

Many salons and clinics, and even a few plastic surgery hospitals, are poorly equipped for surgery and lack access to lifesaving emergency equipment, she said.

"The prices of plastic surgery procedures can vary wildly from hospital to hospital," Wang said, noting the lack of a uniform pricing scheme. Hospitals and doctors tend to charge whatever they want, often citing higher prices for clients who look like they can afford it, she said.

"I think it's time for the government to do something to regulate the market and tighten its supervision," Wang said.

On Tuesday, the Hubei health department held a news conference to say it was still investigating Wang's autopsy results to determine the cause of death and to discover whether a doctor was present during the operation.

However, Wang's family had agreed to compensation offered by the hospital and the woman's body was cremated two days earlier despite the ongoing investigation.

"The exact circumstances of Wang's death may remain a mystery with her body cremated. We can't blame her family. Since they already lost their daughter, they should get something back," said Bai Yansong, a prominent CCTV news anchor.

"Wang's death was an expensive lesson and an urgent warning sign that a complete rectification of the business is needed," he said.

City to redevelop axis for tourism

By Li Zhixin

As part of its push to make Beijing a world city, the city government is pushing a reform to cultural development of core areas.

Shops along the city's axis, especially those from Gulou to Di'anmen and Qianmen to Yongdingmen, will be redesigned according to their traditional cultural features. Large construction projects will be forbidden, and remaining ancient buildings and hutong will be protected from demolition.

Corresponding tourism development is a big concern. "Although there are many historic cultural sites on both sides of the axis, they are scattered because past planning made few considerations for tourism," said Wang Yanyong, director of Tourism Development and Planning Study Center of Beijing Jiaotong University.

He said many visitors only see Tian'anmen, the Imperial Palace, the Temple of Heaven and the Summer Palace, ignoring the city's other, arguably greater cultural treasures.

"The historic sites on the central axis should be the city's core draw for cultural tourism," he said, promoting the reform plans.

The city government hopes axis tourism will involve the cultural creative industry in urban renewal. It plans to draw businesses involved in calligraphy, antiques, art and traditional crafts to the axis.

However, there are two major obstacles to the plan: one is traffic, and the other is the numerous modern buildings that clash with surrounding neighborhoods.

Wang said the government plans to build a "cultural gallery" along the axis that would allow visitors to hit all the major scenic spots on both sides of the street. The second phase of subway Line 8, due to open in 2012, would serve as a second traffic artery for the axis connecting Gulou, Shichahai and Nanluogu Xiang.

"Construction of many of the large buildings along the road was never approved by the heads of government. A consensus of lower officials allowed the creation of many structures that seriously clash with the surrounding environment," said Yao Qingmei, a local resident.

"I hope future construction won't continue this mistake," he said.

The axis of old Beijing is roughly defined as starting from Yongdingmen in the south and continuing up through Zhengyangmen and Tian'anmen and ending at the Bell and Drum Tower in the north. The route stretches 7.8 kilometers.

During Ming and Qing Dynasty, most city planning and architectural design respected this axis.

HIV infections still on the rise

By Han Manman

The country has seen 68,000 AIDS-related deaths as of the end of October, up nearly 20,000 year on year, according to official figures released this week.

The Ministry of Health said that since the disease first appeared in the early 1980s, the total number of registered HIV carriers has surpassed 370,000, with more than 130,000 being AIDS patients.

At the end of October, the country detected 44,000 new HIV infections this year, 13 percent of which were contracted through unprotected homosexual sex, the ministry said.

"In recent years, AIDS infections in the country have continued to rise, though at a lower rate. With intensified education, consulting and tests, more carriers and patients have been detected and the death rate has dropped considerably," the ministry said in its statement.

However, the ministry said that the AIDS control situation in some regions remains grave, citing Yunnan, Henan, Sichuan, Guangdong and Guangxi provinces and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, which are home to a disproportionate 77 percent of the country's total HIV carriers.

The figures also indicated that HIV transmission from mother to child and from blood donations and transfusions have decreased



Fewer than 40 percent of those at risk are educated about HIV/AIDS.

CFP Photo

significantly, while sexual transmission has increased, accounting for nearly 80 percent of the total this year.

The ministry's existing program will be expanded to include 90 percent of the groups considered at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS by 2015, said Hao Yang, deputy director of the disease prevention and control bureau of the Ministry of Health.

Currently, fewer than 40 per-

cent of the high-risk groups, including homosexual men and sex workers, have ever been reached for HIV/AIDS intervention, Hao said.

Hao also urged an end to discrimination to help the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Those infected with HIV/AIDS are often looked down upon by society, and in the case of sex workers and drug users, criminalized. As a result, many are reluctant or

scared to accept services from the government, said Mark Stirling, the United Nations' country coordinator on AIDS in Beijing.

"People with HIV should have the same rights to employment as people who do not have HIV," Stirling said.

He said the government should provide them with legal support and implement regulations and educate the public to accept them and understand them.

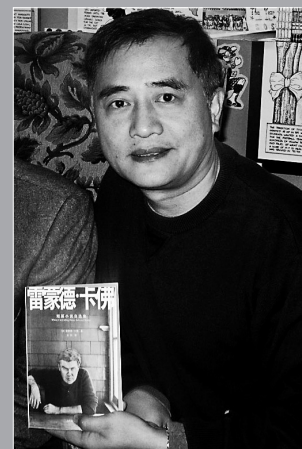
Publishers tap fans to translate pop fiction

By Zhang Dongya

Fan translators have long been famous for their zero-day subtitles of American television shows. Now they are expanding to the publishing industry.

Many publishers are looking to tap amateur fan translators for their projects instead of professionals.

"Amateurs bring a fresh air to the translation industry," said Yuan Nan, editor of Yilin Publishing House, a Nanjing-based press specializing in translations of foreign books.



Amateur translator Xiao'er is a Raymond Carver fan.

Entering print

Xiao'er's translations sell well.

Since January, his translation of *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*, a novel by American writer Raymond Carver, has sold 58,000 copies. Most books only print 3,000 to 5,000 copies – 8,000 for bestsellers.

Xiao'er's book is one of the year's bestsellers, said Yuan Nan, editor of Yilin Publishing House.

Xiao'er has little connection to the literary world. At 50, the electrical engineer works for a Taiwanese company in Shanghai; but online he is known as a Raymond Carver fanatic. The biography published with his translation proclaimed him "the first Raymond Carver uber-fan on Douban," the popular social network.

"I once bought a used copy of *What Do You Do in San Francisco* by Carver online, but all I could find were bad translations. Carver uses simple language, but the translator used far too many words and slang phrases," Xiao'er said.

He started working on his own translations in 2006 and posted them in Douban's Raymond Carver network.

In 2009, Xiao'er published his first translation of *Where I'm Calling From: Selected Stories* through the People's Literature Publishing House under his real name, Tang Wei. His second translation was published this January.

"It is a collective work of the Raymond Carver team. A lot of people submitted revisions to my translation, many of which I implemented," Xiao'er said.

Xiao'er credited many of his Douban aides in the afterword, including 3rdcolour, iceicebeer, ikshu and mujintree.

Amateur advantage

Yilin plans to publish a series of Carver translations, including a version of *The Cathedral*, translated by Chinese writer Xiao Tie, in 2009. Next year it will publish Carver's *Fires: Essays, Poems, Stories*, this time translated by another amateur named Sun Zhongxu.

"In the past, many people worried that amateur translators would have problems with accuracy. Today, we see that many of them turn out to be more accurate. Many people prefer the voice of an amateur translator," said Yuan Nan, the editor in charge of Carver's works.

In the past, translators were mainly English professors at universities. Though professionals in



China has a large market for foreign fiction, but the translation industry does not pay enough support to full-time professional translators.

Yang Duoduo/CFP Photo



Publishing houses are eager to cooperate with fan translators for their lively prose and reduced expectations of payment.

Xiao Yi/CFP Photo

the study of English, their prose was described as stuffy and rigid.

"They paid too much attention to the original text. Their translations may have been very close to the original, but they felt awkward. Book editors wasted considerable time editing their work into something readable," Yuan said.

In this respect, amateurs may

have the advantage.

"They really love books. Most are translating just because they love the author or his works. Their lively prose is often closer to the original intent of the text," Yuan said.

But most importantly, publishers value the translator's comprehension of the material. "Both

Xiao Tie and Xiao'er have experienced hardship by studying and working overseas. They said they had similar experiences worrying about the landlord carrying away their benches while they were sitting on them. This is similar to what Carver's characters experience," Yuan said.

Yilin said as many as half of the foreign works being published today are translated by amateurs.

Sun Zhongxu, 37, a shipping worker in Guangzhou, has published 20 translations. His best-seller is of *The Catcher in the Rye*, the iconic text of American writer J. D. Salinger.

Some amateur translators specialize in certain genres, such as science fiction and mystery, making them top choices for their experience and background knowledge. A professional translator, by contrast, usually lacks the genre experience needed to write convincing prose.

Shanghai Translation Publishing House has published many novels translated by amateur translators, including the horror novel

The Exorcist by William Peter Blatty and *The Matarese Circle* by Robert Ludlum.

Zhang Jiren, editor of its horror division, said many amateur translators added liner notes about specialized terms and explained the background of their translation, information which he said is valuable to readers.

A slump industry

An optimist would say the ability of amateur translators to break into publishing is a sign of the industry's openness.

The reality is that their success betrays a slump.

Xiao'er earned only 5,000 yuan from his first published translation. His second did slightly better, netting him 10,000 yuan.

Most publishers offer only 60 to 70 yuan per 1,000 words, making novel and novella translations notoriously unprofitable.

"This kind of rate could never arouse a professional's enthusiasm," Xiao'er said. "If they were to devote themselves to producing one masterful translation of a book each year, it would mean a yearly income of 20,000 yuan. Who can live on that?"

"That's why China doesn't have full-time professional translators," he said. "Since amateurs don't depend on the money, we can do this."

The popularity of foreign novels has placed huge demands on the publishing industry. But old translators used to traditional procedures can hardly keep up with the demand.

Wang Xuquan, director-general of the fan translation network Yeeyan, said most amateur translators are students, office workers or freelancers.

"They don't care about getting money. They just like translating and sharing their work," Wang said.

Fan translators thrive on praise and attention.

To elevate its users, Yeeyan awards virtual medals for quality and quantity. Besides being a visible symbol of translation performance on the Web, it also presents an opportunity to be recommended for commercial projects.

While Shanghai Translation Publishing House editor Zhang Jiren said he rarely assigned amateur translators to classical literature, for popular genres he prefers to hire someone with a fan's passion.

And with China's newfound love of foreign fiction, the opportunities for amateurs today are endless, he said.



Letter from Shanghai

The past World Expo was not only a display of the latest developments in culture and technology, but a gathering of top creative talents from around the world.

Though China's Robin Hood products may have sullied their creative image abroad, some original designers are still fighting for positive world attention. A country's creativity is always connected to its levels of cultural and economic development – and to its ability to cultivate an audience.

This last issue of "Letter from Shanghai" presents a portrait of the city's creative industry and how one day it may influence the nation.

Old and new fuse in Shanghai design

By Wang Yu

Much as the Beijing Olympic Games did for the capital, the World Expo brought Shanghai to world attention while creating new opportunities for the local creative scene – a world that fuses the latest in foreign ideas with traditional Chinese concepts of design.

Contrary to what many would believe, this is a far more sophisticated process than slapping Chinese calligraphy or Peking Opera makeup on a T-shirt.

Digesting and recasting something in a Chinese style requires tremendous time as designers cultivate both an audience and clients: and this is where Shanghai excels. The city provides its designers with an international arena and a mature commercial system that can easily spot the value in their efforts.

From ideas to products

Wu Haoran, former creative director of the trend magazine *1626*, heads a new creative team in Shanghai. Its business consists of graphic and video advertisements for commercial clients. Back in Wu's hometown of Wenzhou, he runs a second wedding planning agency that supports his creative projects.

"It's a great experience to see your ideas made into products. Shanghai is a city rich in resources and foreign culture. Living in it keeps your mind up to date by dropping you into the middle of the international scene," Wu said.

Indeed, the Chinese creative industry's first breath was in Shanghai: not Beijing.

Today, the yearly output of its creative industries exceeds 330 billion yuan – a staggering 5.7 percent of the city's GDP, according to a research report by Xie Gengyun, director of the media economy and management research center of Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

Creative industry is a term that encompasses many fields,



Devil Nut's trademark three-eyed character is popular among young consumers.

Illustration provided by Devil Nut



Kel Hook, managing director of Wieden and Kennedy

Photos provided by Wieden and Kennedy

such as advertising, architecture, fashion, digital media, music and the performing arts. In Shanghai, any idea that can be adopted and commercialized is part of an industry.

Devil Nut, one of the most successful original designers in Shanghai, has 60 chain stores across the country. It took founder and designer Zhao Yilong six years to get from penning the company's three-eyed trademarked cartoon mascot to producing its first hoodies.



Wieden and Kennedy's Shanghai office shows the creativity of its designers.

A graduate of Lasell College's Shanghai branch, Zhao defined his design as a fusion of '60s-'70s American street style with modern graffiti. The logo character appears fat and cute, but with the bloodlust of Zhao's favorite Scandinavian death metal.

"As for my inspiration, it came mainly from the underground culture I saw when I was in Beijing – the rock scene and the fine arts," Zhao said.

But his reasons for staying in Shanghai were multifold. In Shanghai, he had access to experienced factories and a strong business tradition that made it possible to find good partners and professional employees.

An internationalized scene

Most creative talents in Shanghai are involved in promotion methods, monitoring audience feedback and creating a

unique image. Shanghai style produces slick, easily marketable products that never challenge current trends.

"In Beijing, you see idealists gang up to spread their ideas in a simple way. Here, you need a plan for not only how to develop your idea but also how to sell it. You are swamped in products from developed countries, so you have to get smart to survive," said Momo, the Shanghai-born designer behind Converse's "Love Noise" ad campaign.

Shanghai's mainstream blends the latest trends from the West. Once known as the Paris of the East, it is quickly regaining that title with the help of several international talents.

Wieden and Kennedy, an American advertising agency, opened its Chinese office in Shanghai in 2005. Its Shanghai office serves top clients such as Nike, Coca Cola and Nokia.

Before Shanghai, the Tokyo office was the company's only branch in Asia, but Japan's business environment is decidedly closed. The Shanghai agency better serves business in both China and the Asia-Pacific region.

"A Wieden and Kennedy office depends on the city where it lives in and reflects the city, the upcoming design culture in Shanghai. When you walk outside the office you can see typical Shanghai streets, the buildings and people selling things on the corner. That's where our inspiration comes from," said Kel Hook, managing director of the agency.

The latest creative ideas are also adopted in Shanghai very quickly, in part because of a historic admiration – possibly obsession – with Western culture. The scene's pragmatism pushes designers to catch up with the world.

"The city's rich, mixed culture makes it a place with good taste and a high standard for arts," Momo said.



Traditional roots

"Here we see more and more young talents who are culturally confident. In the last five years, people have realized that China has a role to play on the international scene. I am glad to see the new generation of designers is influenced by things from outside China but able to connect it with traditional culture," Hook said.

Among the young designers, Elephant makes his statement strongly with a look that mixes Tang Dynasty-style patterns, Buddhist Mandala circles, traditional papercuts and modern icons.

Born in Qingdao, Shandong Province, the 27-year-old designer studied at Shandong Art and Design University, winning a design competition his final year in 2005. He moved to Shanghai at the urging of one of the competition's judges who encouraged him to continue his exploration.

Designers like Elephant balk at Chinese artists who imitate the West, aiming for "cool" at the cost of originality. He worked for Wieden and Kennedy for three years on its Nike projects. His designs have even been adopted by Nike's US branch and issued in the overseas market: an achievement Elephant considers evidence of the value in his approach.

Some artists pay homage to traditional Chinese art forms, but do so without any meaning. To Elephant, the idea of crafting a Chinese shell to hide the void is even more intolerable.

"If you see ancient design, such as the paintings at Dunhuang, you can be stunned by the wisdom and design concept. Traditional Chinese culture has totally eroded in recent years. As people in the creative industry, I think we have a responsibility to fix this," Elephant said.

The trend of native products being made in Beijing is nothing but a short-term fad to Elephant and other Shanghai designers. Without long-term plans, they simply recall old memories absent a business model.

Classic design elements appear in Forever C, the new series of Shanghai's most reputable bicycle brand that drove its national rise to fame in the early '90s. Its bestselling models are based on the vintage bikes the brand made in the '80s, but the creative team Crossing Project has ambitions beyond the old designs.

"We also have fashion lines and BMX products. The vintage catches attention and gets people involved in riding again, but what we really want is a style that fuses the old bikes with modern designs. We want to make a 'new classic,'" said Ye Xiaoyong, media and advertising planner of Cross Project.

Unbalanced development

"The Expo helped bring more people to Shanghai to see what's really going on here. Though it is still a growing market here, we have a range of talents. You need to craft them to be designers as good as those in New York or London,"



Elephant's design has been used by Nike's US department on its T-shirts.

Photos provided by Elephant

Hook said.

But the designers alone cannot drive the scene.

The tolerance of advertising clients remains a huge barrier. Companies tend to be more conservative about creative ideas, however, consumers define the market.

"The audience is always way ahead of the advertiser. They learn new trends very quickly and we have to work hard to catch up with their tastes," Hook said.

But a side effect of Shanghai's addiction to the foreign is a trend to look down on local ideas.

Even obscure foreign artists and musicians can pack a venue better than the top local artists. Expats in Shanghai do not need to learn Chinese to be part of the local community because locals are proud to be speaking English.

That means that ideas enter the creative scene quickly, but they rarely penetrate deeper than the surface.

"It's bad to be ignored, but another way to look at it is that it is an opportunity to find your own style – one that can win back the audience," Momo said.

And a truly Chinese design that could win a Shanghai audience is one that could survive abroad.



Reporter's note

The Shanghai Style

Most Chinese people see Shanghai as a proud city. Its residents are unwilling to speak common Chinese and look down on the rest of the country and those born there: the most extreme refuse to allow their children out of the city for college.

This stereotypical attitude has seriously tarnished Shanghai's image in the eyes of the rest of China.

But putting a positive spin to the facts, this attitude shows the self-identity of local culture. Whether the young designers interviewed were from other parts of the country or Shanghai, all agreed that Shanghai's character has long been crafted by its willingness to embrace the latest trends abroad.

Its people believe themselves born to live on the cultural frontier, always a step ahead of the rest of the world. The resultant energy is what drives the city's thriving creative scene.

One creative advertisement for Shanghai's subway aims to show the system's speed with an image of a woman pushing her baby stroller onto the subway and the child already arriving at their destination. Such creative imagery is rarely seen on Beijing's local advertisements, but in Shanghai both the audience and the government embrace the avant garde.



Micro-blog war

Return of early twitter clone results in fierce competition



China has an estimated 75 million micro-bloggers.

Philippe Lopez/IC Photo

By Huang Daohen

They contain only 140 characters. They are short, direct to the point and favored by global celebrities – the US president even uses them to attract youth votes.

They are micro-blogs. Last Thursday, the reemergence of a previously shut-down micro-blog, Fanfou, generated speculation that the government was relaxing its Internet censorship.

It also tightened an already competitive Chinese micro-blog market.

Will Fanfou, dubbed China's Twitter, take off again, this time amid Sina and Sohu's micro-blog services?

Micro revolution

When news critic Wang Jin learned about the reemergence of Fanfou, the first Twitter-styled micro-blog in China, he found himself in a dilemma: he has to decide where to post his short messages.

Wang, in his late 30s, has been posting on Sina Weibo. But Wang was among the first users of Fanfou, founded in 2007.

"It was addictive at that time," said Wang, an active blogger.

The site became inaccessible in 2009. Wang said he was upset for quite a long time, as all his posts were lost. He then turned to Sina Weibo, another micro-blogging service launched by Sina in 2009.

Like Twitter, Sina made micro-blogging practical and allowed users to update via cell phone.

Wang said posting has become part of his daily routine. While driving, he would sometimes pull over when he felt the itch to share

his thoughts with his friends.

"We always kept a close eye on the updates as if it were a news wire," Wang said.

Wang is not alone. A survey on 163.com, a popular portal site, found that more than 90 percent of Internet users admit micro-blogging has affected their life in some way.

Fanfou's return

Fanfou made no comment on its return last Thursday. The website crashed on the day it reopened as visitors flooded its servers.

Wen Yijun, an analyst with Oriental Securities in Beijing, believes the rapid growth of micro-blogging has created a new market.

According to a recent report by the research firm Analyses International, there are currently 75 million micro-bloggers in China. The figure was just 8 million last year and will reach 145 million next year.

Sina, now leading the market, said last month that registered users on Weibo reached

50 million. The company also announced its intention to dominate the market, as it recently partnered with Microsoft.

Other competitors, however, are determined to not let Sina monopolize the field. Sohu recently announced that it will increase its investment in micro-blog development.

Tencent, another portal giant, said it has outlined the draft to expand its activity in the micro-blog market.

Wen said the current competition in the micro-blog field is actually a means for portal giants to defend their advertising share.

"Though there is no instant profit in the micro-blog market, [traditional portals] will be in danger once they lose the battle," Wen said.

Referring to Fanfou, Wen said the company may feel pressure in its future development. Sina Weibo and Sohu's micro-blog service have gained too much momentum, Wen said.

Market watch

Profitability matters in micro-blogs' further development

Though registered users for micro-blogging services seem to be growing exponentially, an industry analyst said the surge will not necessarily translate into profit.

"[The industry] should develop a model to make the market profitable," said Wen Yijun, analyst with Oriental Securities in Beijing.

Wen said the country's micro-blog market is currently at the stage of customer development. People are attracted to the immediacy and convenience of micro-blogging, but it has yet to gain a foothold in the national conscience.

The founder of Twitter tapped the China market in 2009 but failed to find an effective way to profit.

Wen said a larger number of loyal users will be the real turning point for the micro-blog market.

Sina CEO Cao Guowei agreed. Cao told a recent Internet forum that Sina expects to charge a fee once its Weibo users reach 200 million.

Though Cao didn't give a timetable for

turning a micro-blog profit, Sina recently introduced an advertising self-service system, similar to Apple's App Store.

The system tries to explore a profitable method of advertising and distributing shares on the micro-blog platform.

"We will be able to make a lot of profit on it. It is just a matter of time," Cao said.

Aside from micro-blogging services provided by portal giants like Sina, Wen said industrial companies can also make a profit from micro-blogs.

Business is a world where the quick survive and the slow perish. Therefore, immediacy is one of the vital factors for companies to survive, Wen said.

Companies can use the micro-blog to release new products and attract potential consumers.

Wen said a well-managed company micro-blog will reap benefits. Even when people are too busy to surf online, constant updates via micro-blogs on mobile phones will keep them interested in a company's products.

Micro-blog's China track

Though Sina claims its Weibo leads the market, it wasn't the first to enter the

micro-blog game. Fanfou, Digu and Jiwai were among the country's first successful micro-blogs.

But few have survived due to the industry's low profitability and the lack of government support.

In 2008, when micro-blogging was warmly received by young people, critics expressed concerns about the industry's future, saying the service will spread vulgar and illegal content.

Such concerns led to Fanfou, Jiwai and Digu's closure in 2009. According to Xinhua, the shutdown of micro-blogs resulted from the spread of misinformation about the unrest in Xinjiang.

After Fanfou's closure, Sina Weibo emerged to take the market. Many believe Sina may have a better future than its predecessors because as a listed company, Sina plays by the rules and focuses more on the market.

According to insiders familiar with Sina Weibo's content operation, there are two special teams keeping an eye on the micro-blog's daily content to make sure there is no vulgarity or content that runs afoul of the law.

Foreign companies levied same taxes as local ones

By Zhao Hongyi

As of December 1, foreign companies in China are paying the same amount of taxes as their Chinese counterparts, in accordance with an agreement enacted nearly a decade ago.

In the late 1970s, China began attracting foreign investment by offering tax exemptions, reductions and other favorable conditions, such as the availability of cheap land and labor.

In 2002, after entering the World Trade Organization, China promised to adopt measures that would equalize treatment of native and foreign companies.

The process has been ongoing, with several industries already enacting the measures over the years.

The preferential treatment of foreign companies had raised complaints from locals.

"The exemptions for foreign companies gave them a great advantage in the market," said Tian Pingbo, director of the World Economy Studies Center at the Jiangsu Social Science Academy.

In China, taxes are categorized into two groups. One group is a national tax levied by the central government, including corporate income tax, property tax and vehicle tax; the other group includes the two newly levied taxes on foreign companies, which will go to provincial governments.

In 2007, China's legislature passed a law unifying the corporate income tax rate for foreign and domestic companies at 25 percent. Foreign firms were charged a 15 percent rate at the time, or totally exempted, while domestic businesses had to pay 33 percent.

Foreign investment has not been affected by these changes.

In 2009, China received more than \$102.9 billion in foreign capital, \$46.8 billion in manufacturing, \$37.9 billion in service, \$16.8 billion in properties and \$1.4 billion in agriculture.

The figures have risen every year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

"Foreign capital is entering the high-tech sectors, property sector and financial sector," Tian said. "The new taxation policy streamlines foreign capital in a more rational direction and squeezes out investment in the low-end manufacturing industry."

"The trend grew obvious after the financial crisis in 1998, and particularly so after the crisis two years ago," said He Weiwen, an expert from the Ministry of Commerce.

"The next step is to see how the Chinese government, both at the national and local level, supervises the capital," He said.

Tian said he had some concerns.

"We have gotten used to using tax exemptions to lure foreign investment for the last three decades," he said. "I worry that local city and county governments will continue to give favors to companies with overseas investment."

Many Chinese companies have transferred their capital overseas and re-introduced them back home as foreign investment to enjoy the preferential tax laws.

"It takes time to get rid of fake foreign capital," He said.

'Iron bowl' obsession can be bad for nation's future

By Huang Daohen

As many as 1.4 million young people will take the national civil service exam this Sunday, but many observers believe the cons outweigh the pros in the pursuit to become a civil servant.

According to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, which organizes the annual civil service recruit, 1.4 million candidates have applied for 15,000 positions.

The two most popular positions – one with the Ministry of Culture and the other with the Energy Bureau – received more than 4,200 and 3,500 applicants, respectively.

Traditionally, civil servants in China are said to possess an "iron rice bowl," a term meaning stability and lifelong job security. They also enjoy various social benefits, including lower housing prices.

But this obsession with the iron bowl can actually hinder the country's future development, said the Singapore-based newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao*.

With most of the country's young graduates, including those from top-ranking universities, focused on the pursuit of a stable life, the nation will produce fewer innovators and entrepreneurs.

A survey in Sina found that more than 90 percent of respondents agreed that the obsession with the civil service test will hinder the country's development.

"Most of the exam-takers are interested in a stable easy job with good pay instead of serving the people, so how can society make progress?" a netizen wrote.



Candidates wait for the annual civil service test last year in Beijing. More than 1.4 million people will take the exam on Sunday.
Cao Haipeng/CFP Photo

Comment

Ordinary job in the West

The civil service system originated in the UK more than 200 years ago, and China adopted it in the 1990s. In Western countries, being a civil servant is an ordinary job. They get work contracts. Actually, a civil service system based on contracts is prevalent in developed countries like the US, UK and Singapore.

– Jeffrey, secretary, Germany

Iron bowl fading

The idea of an iron bowl for civil servants is fading out. For decades, civil servants have enjoyed a nice salary and high pensions, but this has caused side effects. The government has realized this and carried out reforms in some southern cities like Shenzhen. The salaries and social welfare of civil servants these days are being connected to their performance.

– He Jia, local resident

Won't cause harm

I don't think the current emphasis on the civil service test will hinder the country's future development. For one, only a small portion of the applicants are accepted, so the others have to find new career paths or start their own businesses. And two, the number of civil servants in China make up but a fraction of the country's population.

– Martin Chen, media manager

Smart people should serve the country

I have several graduate students who passed the exam and now work as civil servants. They are smart students, work hard and value and honor their country. They will be of lifelong value to the country. We should not devalue civil service because a country as large as China needs its smartest people in these kinds of jobs.

– Mark Smith, teacher from the US in Beijing

Stir over new judicial interpretation of marriage law

By Chu Meng

The ownership of real estate is a hot issue in divorce cases in China, second only to the custody of children.

In order to handle the increasing number of property allocation disputes, the Supreme People's Court on Monday announced a new draft for interpreting

the country's marriage law.

One item explicitly states that any property bought prior to marriage will not count as a newlywed's "joint property."

Another item states the "marriage house," if fully funded by the bride or groom's parents and under either the

bride or groom's name, will not count as "joint property."

The new interpretations have aroused hot debate among academics, social scientists and women's studies experts, who argue that in traditional Chinese culture, it's usually the men who buy the houses, leaving women

powerless after divorces.

The currently active law was adopted at the Fifth National People's Congress in 1980 and amended in accordance with "Decision Regarding the Amendment of Marriage Law of China," passed by the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress, in 2001.

Comment

Against quick money schemes

Today, many girls marry "Mr Money" instead of "Mr Right." The law serves to protect men from being duped by girls who enter into quick marriages and seek quick divorces.

– Ma Yinan, professor at Peking University Law School

Wives will not share burden

After getting married, I paid for the interior decorations and appliances, which equaled the price of the down pay-

ment of the house. Currently, I pay a bigger portion of the monthly mortgage. Plus, I do most of the housework and take care of my husband and child.

Under the new interpretation of the law, fewer wives will be willing to pay any part of the mortgage.

– Yu Jun, 28-year-old housewife in Beijing

Social stability

The idea of joint property ownership has been adopted by most countries

around the world. The threat of property loss keeps couples together and, to an extent, maintains social stability.

If such restraints were removed, the richer party might take advantage and be more fearless in the marriage. The law sounds like it's designed to protect the rich.

– Pan Caifu, commentator from the Beijing News

Contrary to traditional customs

"No marriage without house" is an old

Chinese custom. Millions of young couples are waiting to buy a "wedding house" so they can get married.

According to the same custom, males get first dibs on buying the houses, while females are in charge of paying for appliances and interior decoration. The new interpretations of the law would protect the rights of males and neglect females as a result.

– Feng Xiaoying, a senior sociologist at the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences

Grassroots rescue team will not be neglected

China's first private emergency response unit accepted by gov



Yuan Shan, the captain of China Blue Sky Emergency Rescue Team is searching water in drought-stricken Guizhou Province.

Cui Meng / CFP Photo

On April 14, a 7.1-magnitude earthquake struck Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province. Hundreds of governmental medical teams, military rescue forces

and volunteer teams rushed to the area.

Blue Sky Emergency Rescue was among the first responders.

"As social welfare advocates, this comes natural to us," said

Yuan Shan, founder of Blue Sky. In 2009, he had led his 25-member professional rescue team in 47 state-level emergencies, accidents and natural disaster rescue missions.

Underground rescue team

Yuan has been extremely busy lately. He spoke with *Beijing Today* late one night after returning from a training exercise in Shanxi Province. Trainings and joint exercises with government counterparts have taken up the bulk of his workload since the government placed his organization under the umbrella of Red Cross China.

Yuan, in his late 30s, learned field rescue skills while in the army. One of his first civilian jobs was to participate in the rescue of stranded

climbers on the outskirts of Beijing.

Eventually, he decided to establish a full-time professional rescue team. With a group of field rescue amateurs, Beijing Blue Sky was born in the summer of 2008.

"Since the moment our team was formed, we started to apply for formal recognition by both the national and municipal civil affairs office. The application materials were a meter high," Yuan said.

As hundreds of grassroots and independent groups in China

learned during these years, trying to win formal recognition was as hard as starting a private media company.

"It wasn't because we didn't meet their standards; there were no concrete standards for such organizations at all," Yuan said. "At that time, I often bumped into Jet Li, founder of One Foundation, because the two of us were so frequently at the Red Cross Society's office with piles of documents in our hands."

A favorable opportunity

Even without official recognition, Blue Sky never stopped working. A mission to drought-stricken Guizhou Province in March to help villagers plumb underground caverns for water turned out to be the group's lucky break.

This March, the worst drought of the last 100 years turned much of southwest China into deserts, parching fields and drying paddies. As of March 28, some 5.8 million people lack drinking water in Guizhou Province alone.

The Blue Sky Emergency

Rescue Team partnered with the Beijing Red Cross to launch the "Water Source Action" on March 20 in Guizhou Province. All team members were volunteers with rich outdoor rescue experience.

Yuan led a five-member team and brought 150,000 boxes of bottled water and 60,000 water purifiers, each of which can treat 1.5 liters of rainwater. The bottled water, donated by the Beijing Red Cross, was sent to local schools.

But these supplies only constituted a drop in an ocean,

Yuan said.

"Our top priority was to help local villagers search underground caverns for water," he said. "A lot of people are in desperate need of water and some of them had ventured into the caves using only a rope. An ill-equipped villager died on March 12."

Yuan pointed out that the caverns were formed by karst geomorphology and were impossible to search without professional training and equipment. The cost of creating a well – about 200,000 yuan – left

the local government frustrated.

"We went to three townships in southeast Guizhou before we moved to Qinglong in southwestern Guizhou, where the drought is more severe. We found two potential underground sources there with the help of the local Red Cross center, and another two teammates arrived to help us search them," Yuan said.

"During that mission, Yuan and his teammates acted professionally and demonstrated specialized skills," said Li Libing, director

more emergency sites.

Yuan said he hopes private rescue teams can become an important supplement to governmental forces. Yuan further plans to separate his team into divisions: campus rescue, urban rescue, field rescue, disaster rescue, caves

of the Beijing Red Cross' emergency rescue center. "They were a necessary partner, far exceeding their duties."

Li said that during severe natural disasters, it's not enough to have just government response teams. "When rescuing lives, the more forces the better, no matter whether they're government or private. And when it comes to accidents involving outdoor sports, grassroots rescue teams usually react quicker than we do."

rescue and water rescue.

"We are now beginning to arrange our training with the China National Salvage Corps," Yuan said. "I hope we can participate in international rescue missions on behalf of China in the future."

By Chu Meng

After applying for recognition by the Ministry of Civil Affairs for two years, the China Blue Sky Emergency Rescue Team, a grassroots rescue force, was accepted by the government last month.

Blue Sky is now under the supervision of the country's biggest NGO, the Red Cross Society of China. It is recognized as China's first private rescue unit.



The team participated in a rescue mission in Yushu County after the earthquake.

Qing You / CFP Photo



Crew members of the team

CFP Photo



After registration, the team joined the China National Rescue Team in earthquake rescue practices.

CFP Photo

Official status received

Due to their excellent performance in Guizhou and Yushu, the government accepted Yuan's application last month.

Yuan received a certificate from the Red Cross Society of China, under the Ministry of Civil Affairs, that officially

recognizes his team as China's first independent emergency rescue team.

"It was unbelievable," said Qu Qu, a Blue Sky member. "Our captain [Yuan] and all the members of the team burst into tears when we got the news."

"Getting registered with the government is just the first step of the plan," Yuan said. "My next step is to establish a nationwide professional rescue network of volunteers like myself."

Getting officially recognized will now give Blue Sky access to

Canadian musician to leave Beijing after 10 years

By Chu Meng

Jon Campbell, well known among expats for his dedication to bringing international bands to China, will leave Beijing next week after 10 years in the city.

Friends and musicians from local bands held a small but emotional farewell party for him and his wife at 2 Kolegas Bar last Sunday night. As a drummer in a rock band, RandomK(e), established four years ago in Beijing, Campbell also played his final show.

"Beijing is virtually my hometown, though I was actually born in Montreal and grew up in Toronto. I will miss everything here," Campbell said.

He first came to China on a six-week sightseeing tour beginning in Xiamen in 1997. He returned and settled in Beijing, near Beijing Language and Culture University, three years later, with little idea of how to put his master's degree in Chinese studies to use.

Because of his interest in music, he began writing stories about local bands that he loved, hated and loved to hate. Over the years he worked as a freelancer and contributed regularly to Beijing's leading English magazine, *The Beijinger* (then known as *that's Beijing*), and the *South China Morning Post*.

"In the early years of this decade, there were only a few good grassroots bands that played diverse music," Campbell said.

In 2004, he moved to a traditional courtyard on Gulou Dajie. More bands were forming around this time, so he found himself at bars on most nights checking out live performances.

He began to use his free time to delve deeper into the local music world.

"I was lucky enough to have captured a remarkable fragment of the history of rock music in China," Campbell said.

Because of his expertise, both Western and local musicians began coming to him for help in starting bands. Campbell parlayed his experience into a gig as a music promoter.

He began organizing events under the name YGTwo in 2005. He started the Time Arts Jazz Series at Peking University the same year. He was the foreign affairs director at the Midi Music Festival in 2006 and 2007 and managed the overseas affairs of the Beijing band Subs. In 2007 he was a speaker at the UK's Association of Independent Music 2007 Mission to China.

Last year, the Norwegian embassy in Beijing appointed



Jon Campbell (second from right) and Chinese rock band Stock the Crew

Photo provided by Jon Campbell

Campbell the program manager of the Go West program, which is a two-year program in Yinchuan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region that exposes Norwegian jazz musicians to places seldom visited by artists.

"I accepted this assignment because the Norwegian embassy had the same idea as me in terms of providing

access for university students to western Chinese cities where modern music and international musicians don't get a chance to visit," Campbell said.

Campbell will move to Toronto with his wife to begin a new era. But he said he will always remember China, and believes his work

will always be related to China in some way.

Campbell said he has been engaged in writing a book about the history of Chinese rock. Before leaving Beijing, he will try to finish the last chapter.

"Earnshaw Books has decided to publish the book in 2011," he said.

Brazilian director presents film about the world of the blind

By Liang Meilan

The first Brazilian Cinema Festival in Beijing closed recently, but a documentary about blind people – *Beyond the Light* – is still on people's minds.

The film by Brazilian director Ivy Goulart, 30, which won the Golden Palm Award earlier this year, was shown in China for the first time at Cervantes Institute Beijing on November 20, attracting an audience of more than 100.

The film follows the lives of seven visually impaired Brazilians. Through presenting their difficulties, dreams, joys and love, the director weaves an inspiring message of optimism into a story about hardship.

This first documentary to focus on the blind debuted at the UN Disability Film Festival on the International Day of People with Disabilities on December 3, 2009 in New York City.

The documentary, originally filmed in Portuguese, was dubbed into English for the premiere.



Ivy Goulart

Photo provided by Ivy Goulart

Goulart and his team took every means to make the movie accessible for the blind. Off-screen narrations are offered to describe what's going on in the film when there is no conversation.

"I was very happy to see that many blind people brought their guide dogs to see the film in a theater in New York designed for the blind," Goulart said.

Goulart said the idea for the film came serendipitously, when

he was asked to make a short video for an educational organization for helping blind people three years ago.

"I didn't pay much attention to the story before I arrived at the organization," he said. "Then I saw them learning life skills and trying to be independent and useful. Some even performed skillfully in high-risk industries such as woodcutting."

Goulart determined to make an encouraging film to show people what the blind are capable of accomplishing.

Goulart received lots of positive support from family members of the blind. One person in the audience in Beijing, Li Jun, a student from Beijing Foreign Studies University, praised the film as "thought-provoking."

"Aside from gaining an in-depth look into the life of the blind, we also see the differences in social support for blind people in Brazil and in China," Li said. "There are very few organizations empowering the blind in

China. Though sidewalks for the blind are everywhere, blind people are rarely seen walking on them. It is a problem worth thinking about."

Goulart also talked about the Brazilian film industry.

He said that, unlike China, Brazil doesn't restrict the numbers of international films screened in the country. Almost all foreign films are allowed there, with American films dominating the market.

He said there is a very promising future for Brazilian filmmakers, as government investment in the industry increases.

With that, Brazilian filmmakers are trying to go global. Goulart has brought his films to several international festivals, like the Mexico International Film Festival and Havana Film Festival in New York.

"I'm very grateful to have this opportunity to present my film here in China," he said, adding that he hopes there can be more exchange between the film industries of different countries.

Learn professional baking from Cordon Bleu-trained chef



Lin Zhong (left) wants to teach bakers the art of making the perfect pastry.

Photo provided by The Fig Tree

By Liang Meilan

As Western-style baking gains popularity in China, pastry cookbooks are emerging to meet the demands of the country's growing number of aspiring bakers.

Yet these books, some including 1,000 recipes in 200 pages, don't teach the essence of baking. For that, you need a professional.

An artistically decorated two-story pastry in Chaowai SOHO, called the Fig Tree, provides just that. The shop doubles as a pastry school for baking lovers and professionals.

"With this school, I aim to introduce the real and complete concept and craftsmanship of Western pastry to China," said Lin Zhong, Fig Tree owner. "Although baking has caught on very well in the capital, there is no institution specializ-

ing in teaching this. Even cooking schools only teach oversimplified baking techniques."

Zhong, 38, was born in Shanghai and moved to New York at the age of 10. She was an investment banker, but when the 2008 financial downturn came, she gave up her business and was ready to choose another lifestyle.

After finishing study at the world's top cooking institution, Le Cordon Bleu in London, she chose Beijing as the location for starting her culinary career.

"People are used to buying pre-mixed boxed powders for making cakes. But the joy of baking actually lies in precisely weighing, mixing, kneading, shaping and baking the raw material with exact timing under accurate temperatures."

The school is open to baking

lovers and chefs as well as kids. Students with different skill levels can find a suitable hands-on class instructed by Zhong. Class fee for one recipe ranges from 350 to 750 yuan.

Recipes taught by Zhong are not taken from any cookbook. They are all her own creations, generated from research and experimentation.

Many bakery shopkeepers even come and learn one or two recipes so they can add it to their stores.

"Pastry is an ever-changing innovation. It has no set model. What I do is just to teach my students one fruit in the exuberant tree of pastry," Zhong said.

During each class, Zhong demonstrates the process of making a dessert. Detailed information like the amount of raw material and

temperature and timing needed in each step are clearly provided. Important tips are emphasized, such as how many minutes of whipping batter results in a fluffy taste when making cakes.

So far, Zhong's students are mostly expats who already have the basic skills of baking.

Her expectation is to draw the attention of more local baking enthusiasts who prefer to bake at home.

She is planning to open an "edible art work" class for artists who are interested in using baking as a media for creating art.

The Fig Tree

Where: Room 702, Block A, Chaowai SOHO, Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Workhours: 9 am - 6 pm

Website: thefigtree.cn

A community to support organic farming

By Liang Meilan

Country fairs directly linking farmers and consumers are common in many countries, but the practice is still trying to gain footing in China. Last Saturday, an experimental educational country fair project bringing together a couple of local community support agricultural (CSA) farmers and consumers offered a preview of what healthy food distribution and consumption might look like.

The country fair project held at Studio-X (Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation) in Fangjia Hutong called upon 12 farmers to build stands for selling environmentally friendly produce to customers. They are all CSA farmers, including Little Donkey Farm, Farmer DUAN, Sunlin Farm, Naturalove and Hanhaisha. This is the first time a country fair has been

held within Second Ring Road.

Another contribution of the project is it generated a Google "farm map" showing CSA organic farms spots in Beijing and how the foods they provide can be distributed. The map link can be found on Studio-X's website, arch.columbia.edu/studiox/Beijing.

"The prices of organic products sold here are lower than those sold in supermarkets," said Chen Xiaoling, an attendee. "And through listening to detailed explanations from farmers, I get to know more about how harmful our current food consumption habits of buying cheap foods with lots of chemicals like hormones and antibiotics can be to our fitness as well as to the environment."

Xu Peiyan, a postgraduate student studying agricultural extension in Renmin University - also a volunteer at Little Donkey

Farm - said that in the city, many organic farmers have an oversupply of produce yet few consumers know how to begin a more natural way of eating.

"This event serves as a platform for city dwellers to learn about environmentally responsible farming practices and their distribution. Farmers can also see the needs of the consumption pattern of consumers. This will hopefully promote the concept of healthy food consumption," she said.

The project was organized by Emi Uemura, a 31-year-old Japanese woman who has been working as a social artist in Vitamin Creative Space, an art community in Caochangdi art district.

Uemura, a "social artist," distinguished herself from artists in the normal sense. "I integrate my anthropological and agricultural academy background into art proj-

ects aimed at bringing about social changes in large or small scales," she said.

In addition to this country fair, she has been working on a "mobile garden" project at the Vitamin Creative Space. She grows vegetables in an open area as raw material source for Calendar Restaurant, also in the art space.

Having lived in the city for almost a year, Uemura finds that people are highly aware of food safety, with more people buying organic food.

"But the distribution system is poor in an underdeveloped organic market. Most of the farms supply small amounts of organic foods for individuals. Though CSA is a feasible way of promoting this kind of urban agriculture, the community is still too small," she said, adding that she plans to make this grassroots charity fair a bimonthly event.

Event

Talk: CSR in China

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is emphasized by many companies in China, but the CSR practices of domestic and transnational companies take on different forms. This roundtable, mediated by Susan Osman, host of CRI's Beijing Hour, brings together practitioners and stakeholders to discuss the challenges, vision and ways forward for running CSR-oriented companies in China.

Where: Capital M, 3/F, 2 Qianmen Pedestrian Street, Dongcheng District

When: December 4, 2:30 pm

Tel: 6702 2727

Cost: 65 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Filipino Christmas musical celebration

To celebrate the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and China, Filipinos in Beijing will share their unique Christmas traditions through a show called "Maligayang Pasko! ("Merry Christmas"). As a celebration of friendship, the concert will also present a Chinese string quartet from the Central Conservatory of Music of China.

Where: Central Ethnic Orchestra Concert Hall, 15 Xiaoying Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 5, 2 pm; December 6, 7:30 pm

Tel: 6532 1827

Cost: Free

Parent effectiveness training

Dulwich College Beijing is offering a special eight-week course showing parents ways to improve their communication with kids. Donna Lai, a clinical social worker with 20 years of experience in child and family counseling from Australia, will demonstrate tested models of communication in the family that can help build relationships and teach discipline.

Where: Beijing Riviera Campus, 1 Xiangjiang Beilu, Chaoyang District

When: Every Friday, 9-12 am

Tel: 6454 9127

Cost: 250 yuan per class

Lecture: Chinese foot binding

In ancient China, foot binding was a custom for baby girls and women to keep their small feet. The practice resulted in lifelong disabilities for women. The custom ended during the first half of the 20th century. This lecture will introduce the history and detailed process of this custom.

Where: China Culture Center, Kent Center, Room 101, 29, Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 3, 10-12 am

Tel: 15110247665

Cost: 40 yuan

(By Liang Meilan)

Snow carnivals in Beijing



Snow carnivals are great for children during wintertime.

Photo by Xiao Xi/CFP

By Zhao Hongyi

Many places in Beijing, including Longtan Park and the Bird's Nest, are preparing to host snow festivals over the winter. Who says one has to stay in when it gets cold?

Bird's Nest – children's paradise

The National Stadium – known as the Bird's Nest – is preparing the second annual Happy Snow Season. This year's festival, like the first one, will open on December 19 and close on February 20.

Aside from the main playground inside the stadium, the organizer will open the warm-up fields to the north as part of this year's festival.

A "snow paradise" designed for children is the best part of this year's festival. It includes a snow castle, snow maze and snow cube, and will teach visitors to make their own chocolate.

The festival includes a 10-meter high ski slope and curl-

ing court. The place will stay open overnight on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Where: 1, National Stadium Road South, Chaoyang District
Open: 9 am – 6 pm
Tel: 8437 3118

Price: 120 yuan adults, 80 for kids under 12

Longtan Park – temple fair and snow carnival

Longtan Park has long been a popular park located in a residential area in the southeast corner of downtown Beijing. It has held an annual Spring Festival temple fair for two decades.

This year, the park, for the first time, will hold a snow carnival. Li He, director of the carnival, said it will open on December 23 and continue until February 20.

Skating, skiing, sleighing, snowboarding, ice-sculpting and show-watching will be the major activities. Performers from Nordic countries will be invited to perform shows related to their folk cultures.

Where: 8, Longtan Road, Dongcheng District

Open: 6 am – 9 pm
Tel: 6511 4336, 6511 4337
Price: 20 yuan

Zizhuyuan Park – the lovers' park

Zizhuyuan Park (Purple Bamboo Park) is in a residential area along West Second Ring Road. The park is famous for its bamboo, rare in northern China. It holds a snow and ice festival every year.

There are places for skating, hockey, bicycling and motorcycling, park director Cao Zhenqi said.

Where: 35, Zhongguancun Nan Lu, Haidian District
Open: 9 am – 5 pm
Tel: 8841 2830
Price: 2 yuan

Yuyuantan Park – ideal for nature lovers

Yuyuantan Park is a considerably large park along West Third Ring Road. During the summer, many Beijing residents like to swim in the natural lake inside the park

amid the trees and flowers.

The park held its first snow festival last year and was received as the best place for tourists who like snow and ice. This year, the snow festival is scheduled to open in January. Features include a snow world, ice sculpture and snow maze. Parents can accompany their children to make their own snow sculptures here.

Where: Middle of Xisanhuan Zhong Lu, Haidian District

Open: 9 am – 5 pm

Tel: 6852 5536

Price: 2 yuan

Chaoyang Park – Water world with exotic flavor

Unlike other parks that hold snow or ice festivals, Chaoyang Park focuses on exotic foreign culture and flavor, holding the annual international cultural and arts festival over Spring Festival.

Where: 1, Chaoyang Park South Road, Chaoyang District
Open: 9 am – 6 pm
Tel: 6506 5409

Price: 5 yuan

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyng@ynet.com

I remember there was a story about earthworms and a DIY worm farm in your newspaper. Can you tell me where I can buy them and how to put one on my balcony?

There are quite a few English articles about earthworms. You can easily purchase them at the flower and pet market (take Bus 300 around Third Ring Road to Shilihe Wenhua Shichang in Chaoyang District). To cultivate your own worm farm at home, you need compost bins, which are available for reasonable prices at Dongjiao wholesale market (12, Xi Dawang Lu, Chaoyang District). Drill some holes in the bottom and side, cover the bin with black trash bags and large tiles, and you have a home for your worms.

I've been crazy about baking lately, so I'd like to purchase a baking set. I'd like some Chinese brands because I know they're cheaper. Can you recommend me some of good quality at acceptable prices?

We collected some suggestions from a professional pastry teacher for you. Ovens produced by Changdi Company are ideal. You can find this brand in many home appliance malls such as Gome. Since the brand has various models of ovens, make sure to get one whose size and power fit your needs. Bring a cake pan and see if it fits. Small ovens sell for about 1,000 yuan and are good for family use. For baking wares, you can check out the brand Sanneng (wx.sanneng.com/en). It can also be found in supermarkets.

(By Liang Meilan)

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Finding happiness

HK stage director explores dreams of the city

By He Jianwei

Stress makes happiness elusive in many big cities, according to survey results published earlier this year.

Hong Kong theater director Edward Lam's latest play, *Grand Expectations*, focuses on the relationship between success and happiness among young urbanites.

In the play, Lam narrates the story of a woman and two men living in a metropolis. "Rapid urbanization has made people believe that the city is the place to realize their dreams. [But] in the process of chasing their dreams, they feel more and more unhappy," Lam said.



In Lam's productions, the city is the backdrop and its dwellers the focus. His productions twist together contemporary elements with classic novels.

His *Madame Bovary is Me* was a modern take on French author Flaubert's masterpiece. *What is Man?* was inspired by the classic *Outlaws of the Marsh* and *What is Fantasy* adapted *Journey to the West*.

This time, he uses British novelist Charles Dickens' classic, *Great Expectations*, to examine the distance between expectations and disappointment.

"The title of the book spoke to me. Many people living in the cities have great expectations, but reality often deals them a cruel blow," Lam said.

Grand Expectations is the final chapter of Lam's Urban Trilogy theater series, which he began developing in 2008. The trilogy focuses on the past, present and future of people living in metropolises in

pursuit of success. "The whole trilogy asks one question: Why are we unhappy?" he said.

Its first chapter, *Design for Living*, was staged in 2008 and told a story of survival in the office. "The competition is fierce and everybody is struggling with office politics," he said.

The second chapter, *Man and Woman, War and Peace*, was staged in 2009 and traced the battle-of-the-sexes, investigating modern gender problems where the distinctions between man and woman have blurred.

This new final chapter explores the meaning of expectations, fortunes and the future for urbanites.

Grand Expectations debuted under the auspices of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region at the Oriental Opera Hall of the Shanghai Oriental Art Center during Expo 2010.

The theme of the Expo, "Better City, Better Life," was part of Lam's inspiration.

"We need karaoke and other activities because we have a lot of expectations. Others have placed many expectations on me to stage a performance of expectation."

After deciding on the theme, Lam contacted director Sylvia Chang to work on the first two parts of his trilogy.

"Finding a good playwright is like finding a pearl," he said.

Chang finished the script in several weeks. *Architecture of Happiness* was her first play.

The drama tells the story of a love triangle between two men in a contemporary city. They have different backgrounds. While the girl's suitors aim to be a superstar and an



Grand Expectations explores the meaning of expectations, fortunes and the future for urbanites.

Photos provided by Yin Lu



ess



activities to relieve our pressure, for ourselves. We also feel that on us," he said. "When the Expo e, I decided to work on the theme n hired Taiwanese actress, writer n a script. Chang previously wrote e diving for oysters. You don't id. ral days. Alain de Botton's *The nspiration. e triangle between a woman and e characters come from radically waits for Prince Charming, her architect. Each confronts his own*

challenges in the pursuit of happiness.

The play is written from the female protagonist's perspective. The female protagonist in the play is faced with a daunting question of finding the confidence to build her own life.

"In modern life, women have been endowed with more freedom and rights, but they still face more problems than men," Lam said. "Women cannot always rely on themselves. When they turn 30, they begin to worry about the contradictions between career advancement and family."

Lam said most women he knows are unhappy. "If most women were happy, there would not be books like *Eat Pray Love*, which is about the fact that women cannot get what they want from men, so they have to stay alone," he said.

Grand Expectations presents a strong cast, including Malaysian actress Sinje Lee, winner of the Golden Horse Award for Best Actress in 2002, and two Taiwanese actors Tony Yang, winner of the Golden

Horse Award for Best New Performer and veteran David Wang.

The stars are there just to get audiences into the theater.

"Unlike in film, a theater director lacks the recognition to be a box office draw. That's why theater always has a small audience," he said. "I'd like to perform to audiences of 1,000 to 1,500, because I'm confident that theater can eventually become an industry as strong as cinema."

"Actors cannot earn money doing this type of theater. We are lucky to be living in a time where we can tour many cities, but unlucky to be living in a time where the pay is not enough to support oneself."

Still, there are other rewards beside money, he said.

The actors gain considerable experience in acting. "In film, you only play in front of the camera for several minutes for each take. In theater, you have to devote all your energy and remember all your lines over three hours. It is more enjoyable to play in the theater," Lee said.

Since July, the play has toured Hangzhou, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taipei. The next stop will be Beijing.



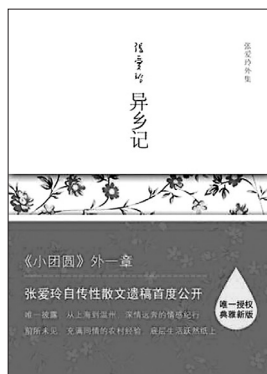
Grand Expectations

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: December 23-26, 7:30pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan
Tel: 6417 0058, 6417 0068

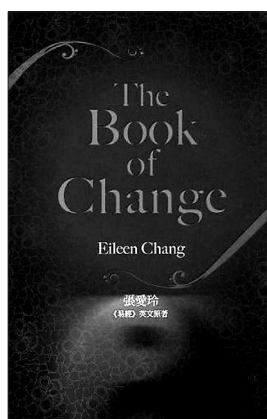
Legacy of Eileen Chang

Posthumous books mark 90th birthday

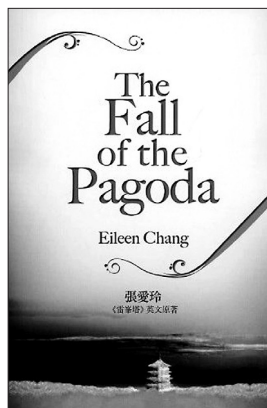
“It is a misunderstanding that Chang only wrote love stories. She cared about social changes. All of her novels are related to historical background, reflecting her observations of an unsettled age.”



Strange Country
112pp, Beijing October Arts & Literature Publishing House, 20 yuan



Book of Change
320pp, Hong Kong University Press, \$18



The Fall of the Pagoda
288pp, Hong Kong University Press, \$17.95

By He Jianwei

Eileen Chang is a legend of 20th century Chinese literature, not only for her portrayal of turbulent life in the 1940s, but also because of her personal life.

Her legacy to literature, film and art is inestimable. With simple and direct language, Chang's deeply moral and realistic stories focused on the tragic irony of human experience. Literary critic Hsia Chih-tsing once compared Chang's short fiction to that of Eudora Welty and Katherine Mansfield.

In commemoration of the 90th anniversary of her birth, Chang's two English books and one Chinese book were posthumously published this year. Many forums on Chang's life and work have been held at universities on the mainland and in Hong Kong and Taiwan since September.

This Monday, 12 writers, critics and publishers met for a seminar at Peking University Hall to commemorate Chang and to celebrate the posthumous publication of her essays in *Strange Country*.

The collection includes essays about a 1947 trip from Shanghai to Zhejiang's countryside to visit her first husband Hu Lancheng, who was considered a traitor and in hiding.

It was a critical period in Chang's life, and most of the essays became inspiration for her other novels, such as *Love in a Fallen City*, *The Rouge of the North* and *Little Reunion*.

"The release of this book not only provides the first data of Chang's personal life in the 1940s, but also helps us understand her intention and process in writing the novels," said Ronald Soong, executor of Chang's estate.

Chang's possessions were inherited by her friend Stephen Soong and Soong's wife Mae Fong Soong in Hong Kong. Their son, Roland, inherited the possessions after his father died in 1996 and his mother died in 2007.

It is said that Chang left instructions in her will to destroy all copies of the manuscripts before she died in the US in 1995 at the age of 74. Roland claimed that Chang had not expressly forbidden publishing those books that were only mentioned in letters to his parents.

Chang is famous for dealing with the tensions between men and women in love, such as her 1944 novella *Red Rose*, *White Rose*. In this short story, a young man fails to resist the seduction of a friend's wife and has a passionate affair with her. When she suggests divorcing her husband and marrying him, the man flees. In the end, he enters an unhappy marriage with a dull woman.

"It is a misunderstanding that Chang only wrote love stories," said Ma Jiahui, a Hong Kong writer and critic. "She cared about social changes. All of her novels are related to historical background, reflecting her observations of an unsettled age."

Love in a Fallen City is a prime example. The novella, set in 1941 when the Japanese attacked and occupied Hong Kong, depicts the divide between the West and traditional Chinese influence through a love story.

Another popular misunderstanding is that Chang only wrote about urban life and did not care about the countryside because so much of her work is set in Shanghai or Hong Kong. "It is



Eileen Chang

CFP Photo

surprising to many critics that she was such a keen observer of Chinese rural life in the 1940s and 1950s," Soong said.

Besides *Strange Country*, her novel *The Rice Sprout Song* – her first novel written in English when she stayed in Hong Kong – is about a peasant family and their struggle for basic sustenance during the land reforms of the early 1950s on the mainland.

"It is easy to describe the magnificent social changes, but it is difficult to unveil the darkness of human nature during the upsurge of social reform," Ma said.

She left for the US after finishing the book in 1955 and started to write two English semi-biographical novels in the 1960s, *The Fall of the Pagoda* and *Book of Change*.

She failed to sell these to American publishers, who said the story of a childhood in China would fail to appeal to US readers.

"Chang wanted to publish her English books and didn't believe those books were not good enough according to a letter she wrote to her friend," Soong said.

The two novels were published in April and September by Hong Kong University Press 15 years after her death.

Some critics argued that American publishers refused Chang's works because of her literal translation of Chi-

nese idioms. In *The Fall of the Pagoda*, Chang used many literate translations: "Break the pot to get to the bottom" means to probe something to the bottom; "A tiger's head and a snake's tail" refers to something that starts with a bang but ends with a whimper.

"It was hard for American editors to understand the meaning of her idioms. However, if it had been translated with English idioms, Chang's distinct language would have been lost," Soong said.

Chinese history was another obstacle for American editors working on Chang's books. Her unfinished novel, *The Young Marshall*, based on the life of Zhang Xueliang, Chiang Kai-shek's captor at the Xi'an Incident in December 1936, was then a figure of contemporary discourse.

"You had to be familiar with recent history or you wouldn't understand the people she mentioned in the books, like Feng Yuxiang and Wu Peifu [two major warlords of the 1920s and 1930s]," Soong said.

Besides her English novels, Chang also translated many of her own works into English. "Her English translations are independent creative works," he said.

At the seminar, Soong also announced a new Chang research project for the next five years to promote study of the author's works and life. The project's budget is set at 1 million yuan.

Look sharp at your Christmas party

By Wang Yu

Though China has not traditionally celebrated Christmas, the country's most fashionable still love using Christmas parties as a chance to shine. Whether your invitation was to a home dinner party or an electric Christmas Eve on the town, now is the time to think about what to wear.

A few seasonal standards is hardly enough to attract other dancers on the floor. Stand out by adding new elements and pay attention to the details. There are some new collections this winter that can be your best friend at the clubs. *Beijing Today* and its guest fashion editor have a few tips to help you party in style this Christmas.



Women's fashion

The office party

As part of the Christmas party season, office parties may be held in bars or night clubs – venues where it is easy to forget you are still surrounded by your colleagues. This is not the place to wear your weekend clubbing getup.

"I'm quite sure that some of us are already panicking as we ravage the closet or scamper for the nearest mall to find the perfect dress. Mad rushes and last-minute shopping usually result in fairly 'Blah' choices. All you need is something you can wear to work and that will let you join the crowd on party night," says Twiggy Song, web fashion editor of *Cosmopolitan's* Chinese version.

The first step is the right accessories. Make a statement with an outstanding necklace, a pair of drop chandelier earrings, specially-designed rings or bangles that stack around your arms. Leave your everyday accessories aside.

"You have to put on something special to create a new you at least once a year. Some outfits that have been hiding in your closet can be pulled out. Such clothes should have one-of-a-kind details, plush fabrics or unique patterns. Just don't be too sexy. Remember that the next week the people from the party will still be your coworkers," Song says.

A shimmery dress or studded ensemble fit a party better. Small doses of fancy details at the top of your dress or blazer are enough to make you stand out at the office party. As for colors, besides green and red – the Christmas favorites – consider fuchsia or bright orange.

At the club

Years after college, the fun of flirting at the club can seem muted. Today, the vanity of clubbing may be more about attracting the attention of photographers out to capture the latest in fashion.

"You don't have to dress like a celebrity on the red carpet to make a statement. They have sponsors footing the bill for their expensive dresses and professional designers helping them to create a perfect look," Song says.

Christina Wang, an office lady, joined the queue at 5 am outside H&M last Tuesday for the Lanvin for H&M collection. Products from the series sold out in one hour in the capital. Wang managed to snag a black dress that cost 1,500 yuan.

"I love the dress so much and it will definitely become my essential party outfit by the end of the year," Wang says.

The limited collections by famous designers may be sold out, but fashion fans still have other ways to look sharp. The biggest trend in recent years is 50s style, so the era's waist-cinching prom dresses with flaring skirts are the way to go. These dresses are often strapless with lace overlays. They are a good match for kitten heels on the dance floor.

"The one-shoulder dress also fits parties. It can cleverly move from spring to fall with ease due to its classic silhouette and flattering form. Remember to go with shorter styles that rest on the knee for a less serious, cocktail feel. A sassy shape with ruffles, tucks, an interesting shoulder-strap and great jewel color can work," Song says.

A simple shape, preferably a short cut with some swing-embellished dress, will allow your look to shimmer and glimmer beneath a disco ball. The little white dress makes white the new black. Movie stars like Sienna Miller have done well by pairing it with metallic accessories. The simple white color leaves you more space for imagination.

"As for the make-up, I suggest colors like claret or wine red to obtain a vintage look for your lips. Products like Chanel's Rouge Coco are perfect. Personally, I would go with a pair of Alexander Wang high heels for myself at any party," Song says.

Mens fashion

Compared with the ladies, fashion tips for men are usually simpler. However, some advice is still needed for men who want to keep up with the latest trends.

Daniel Feng, a graphic designer, has a closet full of suits and shirts. From Zara jackets to second-hand 90s suits that he bought on Taobao, Feng considers such clothes the best outfits for both work and play.

"Suits are like a uniform for me. I don't like to match a jacket with loose pants like you see in street fashion. A pair of dark regular-fit pants is always my choice," Feng says.

Since the Christmas party is one of the most important parties of the year, it is wise to choose a nicely designed suit as you would a formal occasions. Wear a classic style shirt or a plain white T-shirt under the jacket to look sharp.

Velvet suits are this year's biggest trend. You can see them everywhere at shows and in street fashion photos. A velvet jacket alone should be fine because full velvet is not for everyone. Accessories like cuff links or a silk scarf around the neck or a handkerchief in the jacket pocket show taste.

"For footwear, go with short boots that feature a brogue pattern," Song says.

Samo — a buyer's boutique

By Annie Wei

Xiao Hui, a man in his 20s who has nurtured a passion for fashion since early youth, recently opened his first boutique, Samo, with friends at Nali Patio.

When Xiao was in college, he was extremely frugal, sometimes walking two hours through snow to avoid paying 1 yuan for a bus ticket. But when it came to fashion, money was no issue, which is why these days he would not hesitate to spend 20,000 yuan for a jacket from Peninsula Hotel.

"I want to have a store like Lane Crawford, which showcases new-age local and overseas designers," Xiao said.

With Samo, he's on his way.

A long-time high-profile fashion expert, Xiao, who is in charge of his store's merchandise, has connected with powerful Chinese consumers for years, and knows well their likes and dislikes.



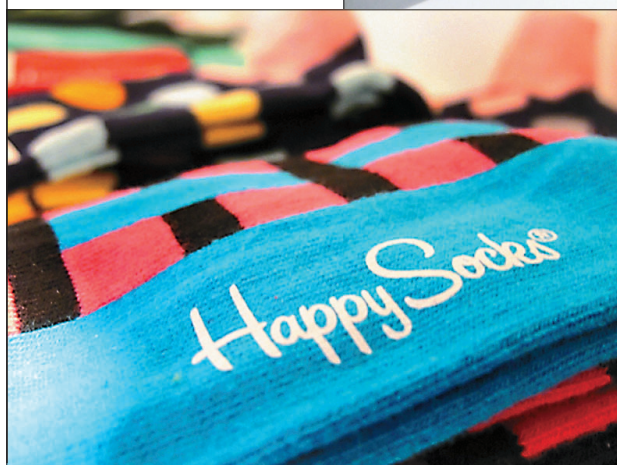
Onitsuka tiger, 1,490 yuan

This is a well-known Japanese brand founded in Kobe in 1949. It now represents the forward-looking face of modern, metropolitan Japan. It's sporty and comfy.



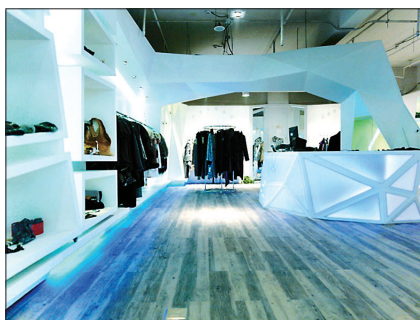
Rimova, 5,960 yuan

This well-known luggage brand's limited edition was only sold in Lane Crawford. Xiao carried it back from Hong Kong.



Happy socks, 189 to 195 yuan

This is a Swedish brand founded in 2008. The brand is sold in 40 countries and known for its creative design and quality cotton.



Samo's inside



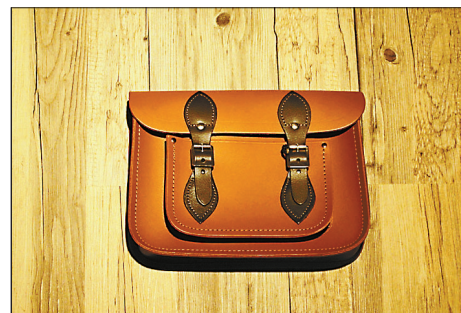
Juicy jewelry, 2,980 yuan

Photos provided by Samo



Wallet — Prada and Miu Miu (3,590 to 4,290 yuan)

Xiao recommends the Prada wallet in Chinese red. "[The color] is very popular this winter," he said. Another limited-edition wallet in leopard print (4,450 yuan) can't be found anywhere else in Beijing, Xiao said.



Preppy bags in brown and green, 1,790 yuan

A vintage style from a British brand. "It goes well with the punk look, with leather jacket, long T-shirt and tight jeans," said K.K., a model and friend of the storeowner.



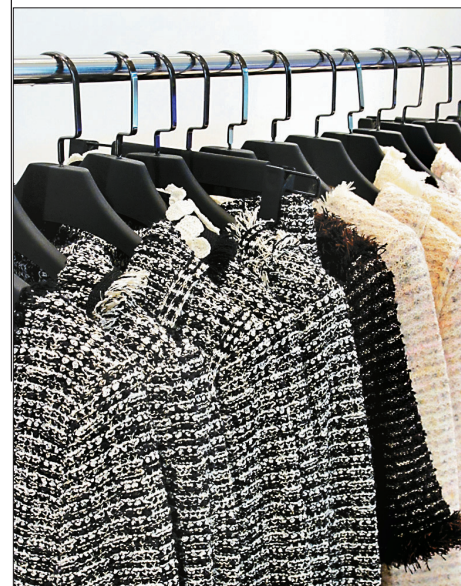
Ana wallet from Hong Kong, 7,900 yuan

The Ana wallets and bags are popular among celebrities in Hong Kong. Designer Ana Woo has been in bag design for 17 years. She personally dyes the handmade bags.

This bag is made of anaconda skin. Meticulous attention has been given to the details, like the stitches, Xiao said.



Sparrow hat, 1,500 to 2,300 yuan



Gioia Pan from Taiwan, 3,000 to 50,000 yuan

Samo

Where: 3rd floor, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am — late
Tel: 5208 6308

New places open at Chaoyang Park's west gate

By Annie Wei

Change is the one constant in the universe. No one knows that better than the people in the food and beverage industry, but sometimes the speed of change can even take them by surprise.

Take the area around the west side of Chaoyang Park, for example. So many new places have appeared recently – some replacing long-time businesses – that it's hard to keep up. *Beijing Today* is here to provide the following primer.

Cheese and Wine

Run by a French-Chinese couple, Cheese and Wine, next to Jenny Lou's, is hard to miss with its big window and wooden frames, chandeliers and a wall of wine racks.

The ambiance is charming and cozy, which tempts people to walk in and try their wine and food.

Owner Laveii Chen said the place, now on its third month, has already drawn many gourmet diners and reviewers.

"My husband likes wine and I like cheese," she said. There is a chilled cheese room in the back, with humidity and temperature control. Imported artisanal fromage from France are kept there for growing, Chen said. Cheeses are sold by weight (starting from 45 yuan per 100 grams) or by three fixed-price platters. Try the Laguiole, a semi-hard aged cheese with robust flavors, or Coeur de Neufchatel, which is delicious and creamy.

Wines are not cheap. The store does have one or two kinds that are less than 200 yuan, but most start from 300 yuan. Chen said the wine quality was superior to what you'd find at supermarkets.

Cheese and Wine is not a big place, with only a few tables and chairs. They have mulled wine for 30 yuan per glass. Staff is friendly and can give advice on both wines and cheese varieties for pairing.



Cheese and Wine's front Photo by Ding Chunhan

Cheese and Wine

Where: 1-15 Chaoyang Gongyuan Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: Noon – midnight, Sunday to Wednesday; noon – 1:30 am, Thursday to Saturday
Tel: 6501 2901



Photo by Zhang Kaixin/CFP

Xiangmanlou

This Beijing duck restaurant, popular among local diners, opened its second outlet after a decade. Year after year, Xiangmanlou, with only one floor of space near Yuyang Hotel, has always been packed for lunch and dinner. Locals like its authentic dishes and reasonable prices.

Because the restaurant does not take reservations, there are always lots of people waiting at the reception for weekend dinners.

The new outlet is more spacious, with two floors: the first for smaller groups and the second for reservations only. There is a big parking lot out front.

Some dishes are a few yuan more expensive than before, but the quality remains exceptional.

Xiangmanlou

Where: 1-5, Chaoyang Gongyuan Xi Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11:30 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6595 0969



Photo by Jianhua/CFP

Old Beijing hotpot

Hotpot is great during the winter, with the most famous places offering Sichuan or Old Beijing hotpot.

Sichuan hotpot is known for its spicy and strong aroma, while Beijing hotpot is milder and favored by Chinese Muslims and the Hui ethnic group. The traditional Beijing hotpot uses bronze pots heated by coal – not electricity and gas – and results in a slightly different flavor and dining experience.

The prices are quite reasonable. For a big bronze hotpot, the broth costs 15 yuan for a large and 10 yuan for a small. The must-eat is the Mongolian lamb (22 to 28 yuan), which has a rich and succulent

taste. You can also try different platters – lamb (48 yuan), beef (58 yuan), mushroom (28 yuan), vegetable (22 yuan) and handmade meatballs (48 yuan).

There are five kinds of dressing to choose from, including wild chili (3 yuan) and seafood (5 yuan). They all complement the food well.

For beverages, we recommend the freshly grounded soymilk (8 yuan per glass) and fresh water chestnut and sugarcane juice (12 yuan per glass).

Laobeijing Siji Shuanrou

Where: 1-20 Chaoyang Gongyuan, Xi Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6593 1082

Tea time

There are few better ways to wile away a weekday afternoon than meeting with a friend or client for an extended tea break.

The Lounge on the 80th floor of China World Tower is a good place to do that, with outstanding tea and an unbeatable view.

There are 60 types of premier teas, coffees and cocktails available all day. There are eight kinds of hot chocolate (68 yuan per cup) and 20 kinds of cheesecake (30 yuan per slice).

For Western tea, one can choose Mokbarie (65 yuan), which is a broken-leaf tea with an aroma of malt and spices. Other choices include rose tea with petals (65 yuan), a blend of fine Chinese tea with rose petals and a mild, light aroma; Shangri-la tea (65 yuan), which has a rich pineapple-

kiwi-plum aroma, with babaco fruit and a full-body tea blend from Java, Ceylon and India.

A tea master works in the lounge and can help you winnow the choices. A recommended Chinese tea is extra dragon well tea (160 yuan per person), known for its shapely leaves, fragrance and mellow taste. Other Chinese teas include oolong, pu'er and jasmine.

Lots of teas pair well with snacks. William Pitt the Younger (85 yuan) is a combo that includes tea, scones, jam and cream; 7th Duchess of Bedford (110 yuan) is scones and petit fours; Queen Victoria (140 yuan) is sandwiches with scones and petit fours.

The Shangri-La Tea combo (320 yuan) comes with a tray of scones, petit fours, sandwiches and a glass of champagne.

Photo provided by the China World Tower



The Lounge

Where: 80th floor, The China World Tower, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District
Open: 5-6 pm
Tel: 6505 2299 ext. 6431

Plight of marriage in India

By He Jianwei

Many young men from the northern Indian state of Punjab go abroad for work and only return because of the centuries old tradition of arranged marriages. But immediately afterwards they abandon their wives and resume their life in foreign countries.

The installation *Match Fixed*, made by the Indian duo Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra, is a biting satire of arranged marriages in Punjab. "Most of our work addresses the issues, cultural shifts, problems and beliefs of people living in India today," Tagra said.

The two artists grew up with the idea that emigrating to the US, Canada and Germany was the Indian dream.

"As they go to the foreign countries, either for work or study, Punjabi men often find themselves isolated, and stick close to their own community," Tagra said. "Then they go back to India to be married, which is usually arranged by their parents or relatives."

As a result of these loveless marriages, it's common for newlywed husbands to find excuses to return abroad without their brides, with empty promises of coming back later.

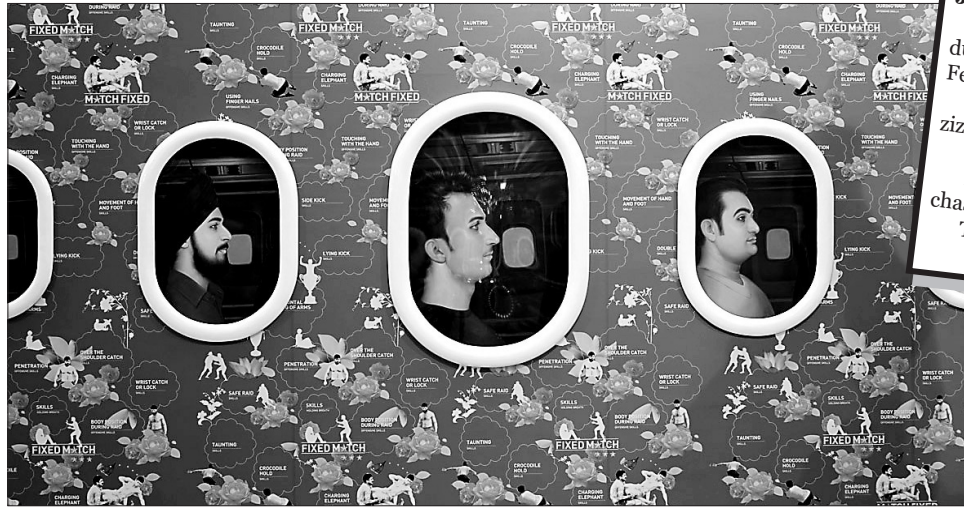


Photo provided by UCCA

To reflect this social issue, the artists have transformed the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art's (UCCA) space into a playing field, where the ancient Indian sport of kabaddi is played.

In this game, two teams occupy opposite halves of a field and take turns sending an attacker into the other half, winning points by tagging or wrestling members of the opposing team. Then, the attacker returns to the own half, shouting "kabaddi."

"It is like marriage in

Punjab – the husbands come and go. But the wives can never win this match," Thukral said.

In the room, the ceiling fans hang with turbans, the portraits of "husbands" glimpse

out of airplane windows, TVs show interviews with abandoned wives. "This installation is a rococo rendering of real-life sorrow," said UCCA director Jerome Sans.

Thukral & Tagra: Match Fixed

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 9, 2011, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students, free on Thursdays

Tel: 8459 9269

Friday, December 3

Exhibition Lu Zhengyuan: 84 Days, 84 Works

Curated by sculptor Sui

Jianguo, this exhibition will show his student Lu's works. Lu began a "one-work-a-day" project on October 16, and aims to produce a total of 84 works.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 9, 2011, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students, free on Thursdays

Tel: 8459 9269

Movie

The Awful Truth (1950)

This film analyzes Shanghai's recession following World War II. Government official Pan Zhongfu plots to

swindle a failing businessman, He Zhixin, and steal his mistress' affections. A young assistant in He's company pays a large sum of money for a higher position to impress his future father-in-law.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 8229 6153

Nightlife

Miss Stocking

Defined by Chen Chengyun's whispery vocals, this Taiwanese indie pop band released its latest album in May.

Where: Mako Livehouse, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 120 yuan advance purchase, 150 yuan at the door

Tel: 5205 1112

Sunday, December 5

Exhibition Empire Borders I & II – Chen Chieh-jen Solo Exhibition

The Taiwanese artist tries to eliminate imperial consciousness through two videos reflecting on the US' long-term domination of Taiwanese society and the formation of that society as one without historical records or a collective consciousness.

Where: Long March Space,

798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 10, 2011, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9768

Nightlife

Red Dragon

This folk band consists of guitarist Nicolas from Greek and Liu Yang on the keyboard.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: November 11, 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6401 4611

Movie



One Day You'll Understand (2008)

When the trial of Lyon's Gestapo head Klaus Barbie

plays out on television, a French businessman recalls the memories of his grandparents who died in a concentration camp during the Holocaust, sorting through photographs, letters and memorabilia.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Saturday, December 4

Nightlife Curry & Coco

This French duo makes disco and new wave electronic pop.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Exhibition



Nirvana – Huang He Solo Exhibition

This exhibition presents Huang's latest paintings and installations from the past three years, reflecting his memory of historical events.

Where: Michael Shultz

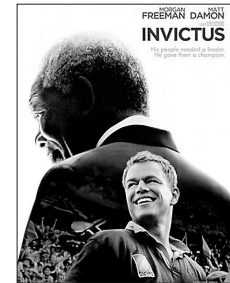
Gallery, 249 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 13, 2011, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6431 9181

Movie



Invictus (2009)

This movie is about how newly elected South African President Nelson Mandela united an apartheid-torn land before and during the 1995 Rugby World Cup, which was hosted in his country.

Where: Lady Book Saloon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6270 1928

Upcoming

Nightlife Jack Sparrow

This Leeds-based dubstep producer is the resident DJ at Outlook Festival Croatia.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: December 8, 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in January

Concert

Pinchas Zukerman and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 2, 7:30 pm

Admission: 280-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 3, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-880 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

American Symphony Orchestra

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: January 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Dance

Nacho Duato's Choreography

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 13-15, 7:30 pm

Admission: 160-500 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Madame Butterfly

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 13-16, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Fuego! – Carmen Mota's First China Tour

Where: Beijing Exhibition Center Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

When: January 18-23, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-1,200 yuan

Tel: 5129 7260

Drama

Lao She's Short Stories: Five Acts of Life

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 1-9, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Red Cliff

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: January 13-16, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Don't let nightmares stop your sleep

By Li Zhixin

It's easy for one's nightly quest for sweet dreams to get hijacked by nightmares. Although many people may think a little lost sleep not a deal, nights' awake can add up leaving you feeling powerless and scatter-brained throughout the day.



CFP Photo

Liu Yali, 29, an advertising planner, had reoccurring nightmares throughout November. At first she took her nightmares like a thriller film and relished the opportunity to play the heroine.

But after weeks of broken sleep, the nighttime horrors began to rattle her daily life.

Her trance-like state caused her to pass out on the subway and bus, missing her stops.

"Throughout the day, I kept getting lost in the details of those terrible dreams and thinking about what I would do if they were real," she says. It took a car crashing into her at a low speed to jog her from dangerous daytime reverie and send her seeking treatment.

Wang Shumin, head neurologist at Beijing Beihai Hospital, says nightmares usually tend to occur during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep when most dreaming takes place. Periods of REM grow longer throughout the night, causing the most serious nightmares to occur in the early morning.

Nightmares vary from

person to person, but there are some common elements. Many people have nightmares about being unable to run fast enough to escape danger or about falling from a great height.

"If you've seen something traumatic such as a bloody assault or accident, you may have recurrent nightmares about the experience," Wang says.

Nightmares can be also caused by a variety of factors and underlying disorders. Some people have bad dreams after eating a late-night snack, which can increase metabolism and signal the brain to be more active. A number of medications also are known to contribute to nightmare frequency.

"Drugs that act on chemicals in the brain, such as antidepressants and narcotics, are often associated with nightmares. Some blood pressure medications can also trigger nightmares in adults," she says.

A number of psychological triggers also contribute to nightmare in adults. For example, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress syndrome can cause people to experience

chronic, recurrent nightmares.

Sleep deprivation can also cause nightmares by weakening the quality of sleep, as can disorders like sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome. If no cause can be determined, nightmares themselves may be a distinct sleep disorder. People who have relatives with serious nightmares are more likely to have them themselves.

"If you experience nightmares regularly and they have a significant impact on your health and well-being, it's best to consult a therapist. A medical professional can help you confront the deeper psychological roots of your nightmares in ways that are difficult to examine alone," Wang says.

Among people who experience nightmares, those who are anxious or depressed are more likely to be distressed about the experience and suffer even more psychological ill effects.

Nightmare-induced sleep loss can cause numerous other medical conditions, including depression, obesity and heart disease.

Natural ways to beat bad dreams

Adjusting your nightly routine may give you the upper hand in conquering your nightmares. Try these tips to reclaim your peace of mind and improve sleep quality:

- 1. Relieve stress.** Pressure is one of the most common causes of both nightmares and insomnia. One of the best approaches to stop nightmares is to eliminate and relieve stress.
- 2. Take a hot bath before bedtime.** A comfortable bath is a great way to relax. Add some essential oils so the gentle fragrances can linger after you're in bed.
- 3. Listen to soft music.** Try to choose some music that brings peace of mind before bedtime. A calm mind is less apt to experience bad dreams.
- 4. Meditate for 15 minutes before sleep.** Learn meditation techniques by enrolling in classes or researching meditation online. Thousands of years of experience show meditation to be an effective sleep remedy.
- 5. Don't watch horror movies before bed.** If you're watching people rip each other to shreds on the screen just before bedtime, some memories of these visions may creep into your dreams.
- 6. Adjust your eating habits.** Digestive dysfunction can cause nightmares too. Eating earlier in the evening is not only a good habit to maintain good body weight and health, but also good for your sleep. "Avoid having spicy, greasy and gas-causing meals for dinner, as the accumulation of gases and acids can induce nightmares," Wang says.
- 7. Don't take drugs and alcohol.** Nicotine, alcohol and illegal recreational drugs can cause nightmares. Some prescription medications can do this as well. Even if you think that certain drugs may prevent you from having nightmares, these tend to lessen the quality of sleep in general. Find ways to achieve satisfying sleep without the aid of drugs.
- 8. Making a list of things to remember.** If you feel like the next day will be a challenge, preparing a list can help relieve some of the anxiety of having to remember so many details.



The gate of the Presidential Palace

Tracing the history of the Republic in Nanjing



Central Hotel is a typical Republic building located on East Zhongshan Road.



A large Chinese painting in Sun Yat-sen's meeting room depicts the moment Sun was sworn in as the provisional president.



Xuyuan is a typical southern garden, where both Sun Yat-sen's office and residence are located. CFP Photo

By Zhang Dongya

As an ancient capital, Nanjing precedes Beijing. It first became Wu's capital in 229 during the Three Kingdoms Period (220-280), and was a national capital as recently as 62 years ago, when it was capital of the Republic of China (1912-49).

The centennial of the Xinhai Revolution, led by Sun Yat-sen, is next year, providing a fitting opportunity to look back on the short history of the Republic.

Nanjing has many places that can take you back to that period, from museums to mausoleums to the streets themselves.

Zhongshan Boulevard

The best way to get a feel of life during the Republic is to walk down Zhongshan Road, the first boulevard built in Nanjing.

Several buildings along this road are in the architectural style of the Republic, including the Ministry of Communications and Ministry of Railways.

Central Hotel is a typical Republic building, constructed in 1929. Located on East Zhongshan Road, it is a grand three-story red-and-white building. It received lots of historical figures during its peak, including Chiang Kai-shek and warlord Zhang Xueliang.

North, South and East Zhongshan Road splinter off the main street. "West Road" is missing because, according to tradition, West Road is another way of saying "to pass away."

Presidential Palace

Nanjing did not widen its main road as the city developed partly because of the large plane trees on either side of the boulevard. Some are more than 100 years old. To many visitors, the trees are the most impressive things in the city.

On the road to the Presidential



To many visitors, old plane trees are the most impressive things in Nanjing. Photos by Mockingbird

Palace are several rows of plane trees. Big leaves dot the road, adding to its charm.

Located on Changjiang Road, the Presidential Palace, while serving as the office of the president, was actually first built more than 600 years ago during Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The gate of the Palace, which now reads "Office of the President," has undergone many changes. It read

"National Government" during the Republic period and took on its present name in 1948.

The Palace was once the office of the chief government officials in charge of Jiangsu and Jiangxi provinces during Ming. Later it was the palace of Hong Xiuquan, leader of the failed Taiping Rebellion against the Qing Dynasty.

After the Xinhai Revolution, Sun Yat-sen was sworn in at the Presidential Palace as the provisional president of the Republic of China in 1912.

Walking west out of the gate, the first attraction is Xuyuan Garden, also called West Garden, where both Sun's office and residence are located. It was first built as the garden of Ming Emperor Zhu Gaoxu in early Ming. It is a garden typical of southern China, with rocks, water and delicate pavilions.

Taiping Lake, inside the garden, resembles a vase. On the bottom of the "vase" is a marble boat built in 1746, inscribed Buxi-zhou - "a boat needs no tether" - by Emperor Qianlong. Both Hong and Sun had used the stone boat to receive visitors.

Continued on page 21...



Sun Yat-sen's office is a Western-style one-story building.

The Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum has been free to the public since November 12. CFP Photo



Sun Yat-sen was sworn in at the Presidential Palace as the provisional president of the Republic of China in 1912.



From a large archway marking the entrance, there are 392 stairs to the sacrificial hall and vault.



Nanjing has buildings and roads named after Sun Yat-sen, including Zhongshan Boulevard and Zhongshan Gate. Photos by Mockingbird

...continued from page 20

On the west bank of Taiping Lake is Sun's office. It is a Western-style one-story building with a big meeting room, drawing room, office and lounge. The original appearance has been preserved.

On the wall of the meeting room is a 10-meter-long Chinese painting that depicts the moment Sun was sworn in as the provisional president. Unfortunately, there are no surviving photographs of that moment.

Walking north, one will see the major office building of the Presidential Palace, also called Zichao Building. It was built in 1935 when Lin Sen was inaugurated as the president of the Republic.

In the five-story building, the president's office is on the second floor. The one facing south was President Chiang Kai-shek's former office. A large picture of Chiang in military attire hangs on the wall.

File cabinets are embedded in the walls, while imported glass chandeliers and fans hang from the ceiling. There is also a small lounge and restroom, with an imported bathtub, washbasin and toilet.

Opposite his office is a crank elevator produced in the 1930s in the US.

There are also a series of exhibition halls showcasing Sun's life and historical documents of the Nationalist government.



Zichao Building is the major office building of the Presidential Palace.

Presidential Palace

Where: 292 Changjiang Lu, Open: 8 am – 5 pm (November 1 – March 31)

Admission: 40 yuan

Getting there: Take Bus You1, You2, 3, 29, 44, 51, 65, 95, 163 and 304 to Zongtongfu stop.

Note: Tickets are available before 4 pm.

Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum

Since November 12, the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum has been free to the public.

About 27,000 people visited the mausoleum on November 12.

Sun died in 1925, and construction of his mausoleum began a year later, taking three years to complete. Located in Zijin Mountain, a large archway marks the entrance. There are 392 steps from there to the sacrificial hall and vault.

Ascending the stairs, visitors will pass a gate with a blue-glazed roof. A sign reads *tianxia weigong*, an inscription of Sun's meaning "all for the public under heaven." Inside the gate is a pavilion with a monument created by the Kuomintang (KMT).

Inside the sacrificial hall is a statue of Sun made from white Italian marble. A high ceiling is embedded with the KMT's emblem.

Sun's coffin lies in the vault just north of the sacrificial hall. Visitors have to line up to enter the round chamber.

Visitors can buy chrysanthemums outside the vault.

On the way back, it's easy to get a bird's-eye view of the surroundings, which is beautiful this time of year with its pines, cypresses, ginkgo trees and reddening leaves.

Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum

Open: 7 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Getting there: Take Bus You 1, You 2, 9 and 20 to Zhongshanling stop.

Travel information

Getting to Nanjing: The flight from Beijing to Nanjing takes about two hours. Discount tickets cost about 300 yuan. The fast trains from Beijing to Nanjing take about eight hours and cost 274 yuan.

Accommodation:

Nanjing Jasmine International Youth Hostel

Where: 7 Hequn Xincun, Shanghai Lu

Tel: 025-8330 0517

Cost: 150 yuan (140 yuan with membership) for standard rooms and 55 yuan (50 yuan with membership) for four-person mixed dorms.

Getting there: Take Nanjing Lukou International Airport shuttle bus to Hanzhongmen. Then take a taxi (9 yuan) or Bus 152 to the Wutaishanbei stop. Or take Bus 13 from Nanjing Railway Station (Zhongyangmen Bus Station) to the Wutaishanbei stop.

Dining



Horizon Chinese restaurant

Executive Chef Stephen Lo is presenting a premium set menu of Cantonese delicacies on December 24 and 31. Priced at 588 and 688 yuan respectively, the dinner includes free drinks and one glass of sparkling wine.

Where: Kerry Center Hotel, 1 Guanhua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve

Cost: Christmas Eve, 588 yuan; New Year's Eve, 688 yuan (15 percent gratuity)

Christmas Eve Extravaganza at the Grand Hyatt

This festive season, Grand Hyatt Beijing, the city's favorite caterer of luxury brands, is offering guests the chance to sample the delights of the capital at a "Christmas Eve Extravaganza" in its Grand Ballroom.

Guests can spend the day with loved ones in a joyous atmosphere, celebrating Christmas with all the trimmings and unparalleled warmth, hospitality and service.

The event includes a festive celebration in the Grand Ballroom; free pre-dinner French champagne from 6 pm; and an exquisite buffet of the finest food prepared by talented house chefs.

Where: Grand Hyatt Beijing, 1 East Chang'an Avenue, Dongcheng District

When: Now through Christmas

Admission: 2,888 yuan

Tel: 8518 1234 ext. 3738

Coffee Garden

Featuring traditional favorites such as turkey, ham and pudding, the Christmas Eve buffet dinner also includes free non-alcoholic drinks and one glass of sparkling wine.

While adults indulge in the festive spread and await the results of the raffle, children can enjoy a special surprise visit from Santa bearing gifts.

Guests attending on New Year's Eve can look forward to an international spread with exquisite seafood.

Where: Kerry Center Hotel, 1 Guanhua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve

Cost: Adults, 588 yuan, children under 12, 288 yuan on Christmas Eve; adults, 328 yuan, children, 158 yuan (15 percent gratuity) on new year's eve.



Authentic Shanghaiese food at Xiao Nan Guo

The Beijing Ping'an Store location of Xiao Nan Guo opened last month and has quickly become one of the most fashionable clubs for gourmets to taste authentic Shanghai cuisine.

Shanghai Xiao Nan Guo, a flagship brand of classic Shanghai cuisine, has been making delicate, delicious and healthy Chinese food for 23 years. The cuisine of Xiao Nan Guo focuses on exquisite taste and delicacy. It not only retains the crispy, sweet and agreeable characteristics of Shanghai cuisine praised by diners at home and abroad, but also makes bold innovations in signature dishes such as Sautéed Fresh River Shrimp and steamed herring.

Where: Fourth floor, City Mall, 2 Xinyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 10 am — 2 pm, 5-10 pm

Tel: 400 820 9777

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel gets 4 stars from Forbes

Forbes Travel Guide has given Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing the 2011 Forbes Four-Star Award. The list has defined excellence in hospitality for more than 50 years. As the originators of the prestigious star rating system, *Forbes Travel Guide* provides one of the most comprehensive evaluation systems of hotels, restaurants and spas in the world.

The Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing is one of seven hotels in China and 167 hotels in the world to receive the award.

"We are thrilled to be recognized with a Forbes Four-Star rating for the third consecutive year. It's truly rewarding to have our ongoing commitment to excellence in the hotel industry recognized by the *Forbes Travel Guide*, and strengthens our resolve to provide only the highest levels of service and facilities to our guests," said Christopher Chia, general manager of Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing.

Shangri-La named Best Business Hotel Brand

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts has been voted the "Best Business Hotel Brand in China" for the sixth consecutive year in the *Business Traveler China* readers' poll. China World Hotel, Beijing; Shangri-La Hotel, Changchun; and Pudong Shangri-La, Shanghai were voted "Best Business Hotel" in their respective cities.

The *Business Traveler China* awards honor travel organizations in China for their consistency and quality of service. The poll was conducted with frequent travelers based mainly in China. They were asked to rate their greatest travel experiences in the world, from business hotels to destination spas, and airlines to cruises. Market research leader Synovate collated the results.

"We are very honored to be recognized as the top Asia-Pacific business hotel brand by *Business Traveler China's* readers, and particularly to have received this accolade six years in a row. We consider this award an affirmation of the strength of the Shangri-La brand as there is no better recognition than by the readers of the magazine who are among the most knowledgeable, experienced and committed travelers in the region," said Greg Dogan, president and chief executive officer.

Island Shangri-La and Mercedes-Benz offer X-mas baskets

Island Shangri-La, Hong Kong and Mercedes-Benz Hong Kong announced the "A" basket, a Mercedes-Benz A 160 filled with festive items from the Island Shangri-La. The baskets will be available at the hotel starting November 10. The HK \$235,000 baskets mark the first time a hotel in Asia has teamed with a luxury European car brand for charity. Proceeds will be donated to Heep Hong Society.

Guests who donate HK \$100 will receive a raffle ticket and an opportunity to drive home a Mercedes-Benz A 160. Other prizes include weekend stays in the hotel's luxurious suites with dinner at the Michelin two-star restaurant Petrus or the Lobster Bar and Grill. Raffle tickets are available at the ticket counter on Floor 6 in the hotel and at all hotel restaurants between mid-November and January 2. The drawing will be on January 3.

(By Jackie Zhang)

Aviation

Singapore Airlines codeshares with Scandinavian Airlines

Starting this month, Singapore Airlines' (SIA) customers can enjoy codesharing services to three new destinations in Scandinavia — Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm — through an agreement with Star Alliance partner Scandinavian Airlines (SAS).

SIA operates three flights per week between Singapore and the Danish capital Copenhagen. The codeshare agreement allows SIA customers to connect onward to Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm on SAS-operated flights. SAS will add its own code to SIA flights between Copenhagen and Singapore, as well as on selected flights between Singapore and Bangkok.

"We are confident the tie-up will pave the way for more leisure and business travel by offering customers of both airlines more travel options via Copenhagen and Singapore," said Ng Kian Wah, SIA's vice president of regional sales.

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

A secondhand man to the manager

IS SECOND HAND

By Liang Meilan

In China's ever-tightening job market, to hold a position in a state-owned company is what most university graduates long for. But very few fulfill this desire.

Edison, 25, is among the lucky ones.

He has been working as an assistant customer executive and Chinese-English interpreter for a leading petroleum corporation for the last three years.

Edison, who majored in English in one of China's top universities and obtained many highly recognized certificates, applied to be an office clerk in the international trading sector of the company after graduation.

During his first year, Edison's duties mainly included checking and replying to emails in English, translating printed documents and sometimes acting as interpreter for informal conferences. Though the job was not stressful, the salary was higher compared to the jobs most of his classmates had.

But as a self-motivated young man, Edison pushed himself to learn more about international trade.

He kept tapping into his potential for being a businessman by researching company cases and reading books and related materials. Whenever he encountered difficulty, he turned to his colleagues or the manager for help.

Gradually, he got closer to becoming a professional on international trade. Some colleagues even asked him for help. The manager let him interpret in more formal and critical conferences that needed precise translations.

Edison finally got his chance to do some real international business last week, when he was asked to go with the manager to Kuwait for an important oil deal. Edison read 500 pages of material in 10 hours and drew up a plan that was praised by the manager as creative and feasible.

When they were in the hotel conducting a brainstorming session, Edison came up with a lot of good ideas that surprised the manager.

The deal ended up earning the company a great profit.

In an after-party, the overjoyed manager, a bit drunk, tried to

announce Edison's promotion using his own limited English.

"Thank you Edison, my secondhand man in this Kuwait deal," the 55-year-old manager said.

This sentence made the whole room burst into laughter.

"Does it mean that Edison is a used man? This makes no sense," Jim, one of the colleagues, said.

"No, I mean he helped me a lot. He is my 'erbashou,'" the manager replied.

Then Edison was asked to go on stage and explain how to express "erbashou" in English.

"I'm very grateful that the manager has given me a valuable opportunity to be his right-hand man," he said.

He then explained that "erbashou" (second hand) in Chinese means "helpful assistant." The English equivalent should be "right-hand man."

"This term is largely based on the fact that most people are right-handed. If there is a person who offers valuable information and advice for the leader, he may be considered another competent 'right hand,'" Edison explained.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

1. Austro-Sino art

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): I recently came across a sentence that says, "Austro-Sino art sparks dialogue about cultural misunderstanding." The word "Sino" is wrongly used. As you know, Sino is the abbreviation of sinology, the study of Chinese history, customs, etc. It means "Chinese" in a combining form, for instance, Sino-American relations, Sino-Japanese trade. It is always used as a prefix just as "Austro" is. We may say, the politico-cultural phenomena, but never vice versa. In the case of the sample, you will have to say, Austro-Chinese art, not Austro-Sino art; the Russo-Japanese war, not Japanese-Russo war; the Sino-Korean friendship, not Korean-Sino friendship; Sino-Danish art, not Danish-Sino art.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): I have been wondering about the word "sinologist" myself these days. Where did it come from? Is it used only for non-Chinese people studying China from without? Or also used for Chinese people studying China from within?

2. The President made a point to seek questions from the Korean correspondents

ZS: The sentence apparently seems perfect. Is there anything wrong? Yes, there is something missing here. Can you discern what is it? Let me explain it to you. As you know, there is the phrase "to make a point (of)" to mean to insist on or to make a rule of. It is all right if you say: The President made a point of seeking questions from the Korean correspondents. However, when you say, The President made a point to seek questions from the Korean correspondents, you are wrong. Why? Idiomatically, you will have to use the phrase "to make it a point to do something." For instance, I made it a point to look as healthy as I can be. I made it a point to talk to informed people. So, with the sample sentence, it should be: The President made it a point to seek questions from the Korean correspondents.

TBZ: Make it a point to finish your assignments early enough so that you have time to spell- and grammar-check them. Make a point of asking a friend (ideally one whose language is better than yours) to read them through, before you hand them to your teacher.

3. With wide range of subjects

ZS: We never say "with wide range of subjects." It should be: "with a wide range of subjects." Though it is such a small matter, it is essential. It makes your English perfect. Please never forget the indefinite article in such phrases as "a variety of, a width of, a range of, a flock of, a set of," etc. We say, The book covers a wide range of subjects. A wide range of subjects is overlooked by academics. The composer uses a great variety of techniques to enhance the local tonal color of his musical pieces. The great variety of techniques are worthy of critical attention. A flock of migratory birds used to come to the wetland until the winter was over. The flock of birds on the verge of extinction is under the intensive protection of the state. In the above examples, you will notice the changes of definite and indefinite articles that suit different narrative tones.

TBZ: Definite and indefinite articles are just part of what you have to learn – and pay attention to them while you are reading. It seems like a small thing, yet it is essential. Having just marked a batch of abysmal writing papers, I can assure you that it makes a big difference to the quality of your writing.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Perspective Room

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

The Merriam-Webster online dictionary has several entries for "perspective." For example, perspective is an archaic word for an optical glass, such as a telescope. Perspective can also mean viewpoint, as in: "From my perspective, there appears to be a dangerous nuclear radiation sign on the door behind the 'Perspective Room' sign."

Perspective is a technique used in painting or drawing that gives the illusion of depth in a picture. In this picture, you can see that the angle of the red lettered sign – the sign that says, "Radiation is harmful to your health; when the light is on, please don't come near" – gives a sense of depth to the picture.



Perspective is a way of mentally viewing things in relationship or importance. Something like this: From the patient's perspective, Buddy thought he should

get a second opinion. However, from the doctor's perspective, an operation was overdue. So they compromised: Buddy went to get some perspective on his life and considered his options in the Perspective Room. Meanwhile, the doctor got a new perspective on the problem by means of an X-ray.

"Perspective Room" (or *toushishi*) simply means "X-ray room."

Turns out Buddy did not have life-threatening stomach cancer after all, only an alien life form which had taken up residence in his body cavity while waiting for the Mothership to do its monthly pick-up, the seventh of every month after 10 pm at an airport near you – expect travel delays.

Wall Street 2

Money never sleeps (2010)

Movie of the week

For long-time Oliver Stone fans who expect his movies to carry some controversial political spark, *Wall Street 2* might be a letdown. Set in the New York City at the dawn of the 2008 financial crisis, the film focuses more on the human connection. “Home” is the centerpiece of this movie.

The soundtrack at least is cause to celebrate. The film is a reintroduction of David Byrne and Talking Heads. From the very beginning, David Byrne’s “Everything That Happens Will Happen Today” is featured prominently. The credits roll to Talking Heads’ “Home is Where I Want to Be.”

These old classics that give new life to this film are some of the most striking aspects of the movie.

Synopsis

After emerging from a lengthy prison stint, Gordon Gekko finds himself on the outside of a world he once dominated. Looking to repair his damaged relationship with his daughter, Gekko forms an alliance with her fiancé Jacob, and Jacob begins to see him as a father figure.

But Jacob learns the hard way that Gekko – still a master manipulator and player – is after something very different from redemption.

Scene 1

In the apartment

Winnie Gekko (W): Stop sleeping.

Jacob Moore (J): You mean “wake up.” “Wake up” is positive. “Stop sleeping” is a negative. Either way, it’s not my favorite part of the day.

W: It’s the best part of the day.

J: I feel bad for anybody who feels that way. It means their day can’t get any better.

W: You go to bed too late. You don’t sleep enough.

J: What’s going on with you today?

W: Did I tell you, or did you forget? I’m going to Washington for the week.

J: Yeah. New site, right?

W: We’re launching in 10 days, so the whole site’s down starting tomorrow.

J: What are all those angry liberals going to do without their daily fix, baby?

W: You’re just as liberal as they are, Mr Green Energy.

J: No, no, no. The only green is money, honey.

W: Oh, you’re so *Wall Street* (1), it makes me sick.

J: Baby, come here.

W: No. What did I ever see in (2) you?

Scene 2

At the Keller Zabel

J: You OK, Lou?

Louis Zabel (L): Good day, I’m OK. Bad day, I’m OK. What’s the difference? Do me a favor. Don’t ask me dumb questions.

J: You wanted to see me?

L: Follow me.

(Lou gives Jacob a check for \$1.45 million)

J: Why?

L: That’s some “Thank you.” What do you want, a kiss, too?

J: I thought maybe the news out of London would’ve wrecked the mood.

L: London? Don’t tell me London. I take a look at their sheets. They tell me they got a \$125 million profit, right? I look at the same lousy spread; to me it looks like a buck and a quarter loss. Then they tell me, “Don’t worry about it. We’re making money on the losses.” How do you make money on losses? You tell me. I’m just an old dinosaur (3).

J: Lou, I believe in Keller Zabel. We’re fine. And you’re not a dinosaur. Come on.

L: It’s no fun anymore, Jacob. I’m talking to some guy in Mumbai, Dumbai. I don’t know what he’s talking about. I don’t know what he’s selling, I don’t know who he is, I don’t know how much I’m putting up (4). And my partners, they’re in their graves. They’re laughing at me. It’s just a bunch of machines now, telling us what to do.

J: That’s why you got people like me here, Lou, to lighten the load.

L: Getting old is not for sissies, kid.



Take that money, huh? You spend it on that pretty girl. You deserve it. I remember when the pro sent me you – this skinny kid with crazy hair. I said, “Jimmy, what are you doing to me? Give me a real caddy.” I was having a bad day, and you wouldn’t shut up. Twelve years old, you’re talking to me about companies, sectors and earnings. You had the hunger, Jake. I could smell it then. You still got it.

J: I’ve just never had a check like this in my hands before.

L: You spend it. Somebody has to keep our economy going. Well, get out of my office.

J: Thank you.

Scene 3

At the subway station

J: Mr. Gekko! Excuse me for a moment, sir.

Gordon Gekko (G): Q-and-A’s over,

all right? Buy the book. There’s no more free advice.

J: My name is Jacob Moore. I’m gonna marry your daughter.

G: Does she know that?

J: She pretended to.

G: All right, I’ll give you 10 minutes.

J: I’m a prop trader at Keller Zabel. I specialize in energy with a focus on ...

G: Sorry about Lou, one of the toughest guys that ever wore shoes. But when those rumors start ...

J: Yeah. I wish I knew who started this. I loved him very much. Like a father. He got me a scholarship here at Fordham and hired me right out of business school.

G: Well, no one else in this market’s had the balls (5) to commit suicide. It’s an honorable thing to do.

J: Mr. Gekko, I’m in love with your daughter. And I’d be honored ...

(Gordon laughs.)

J: Why is that funny?

G: My daughter hasn’t spoken to me

in years, and you know it. She blames me for her brother’s overdose and just about every other disaster that’s hit this world since Nintendo. You don’t think it’s strange that she’s dating somebody from Wall Street?

J: Why?

G: Because she hates it. You don’t think it’s funny that she’d fall in love with you?

Vocabulary

1. so Wall Street: here it means to be greedy

2. see something in someone: to find an attractive quality

3. an old dinosaur: someone who is outdated

4. put up: here it means to invest

5. have the balls: have the courage
(By Huang Daohen)